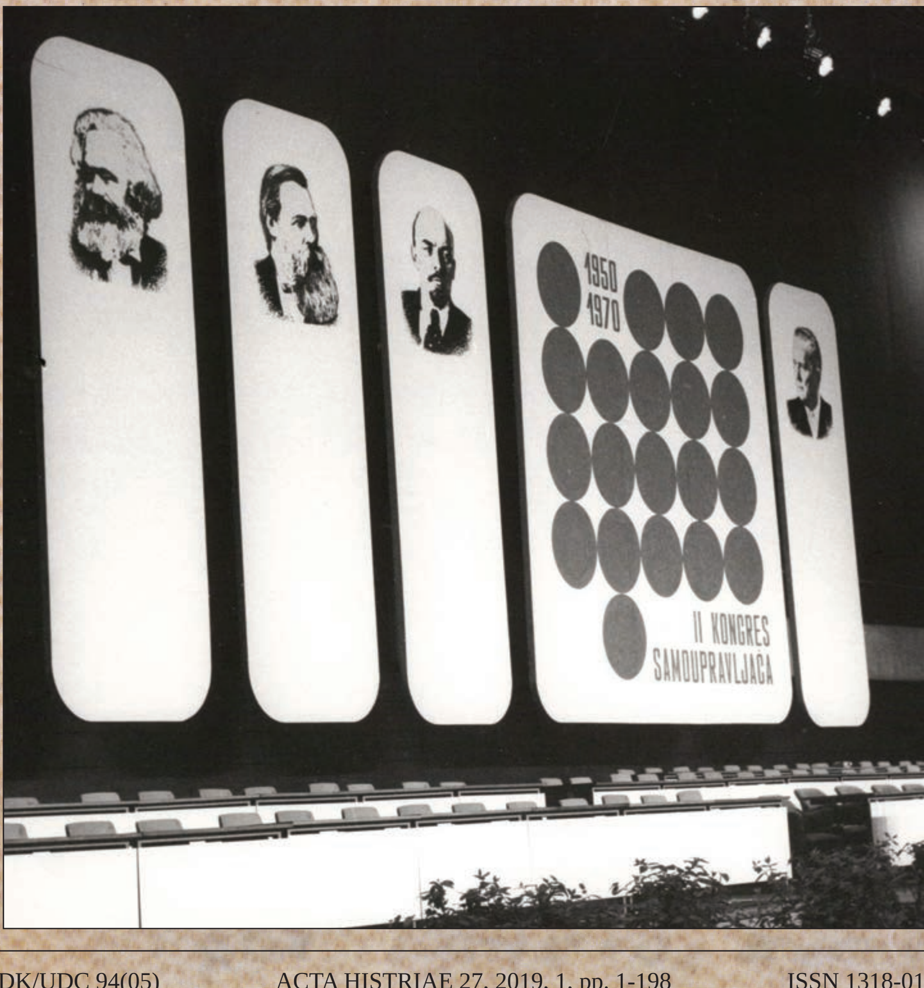
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SOCIALIST SELF-MANAGEMENT BETWEEN POLITICS AND ECONOMY

Albert BING
Croatian Institute of History, Opatička 10, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia
e-mail: albert1.bing@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The article deals with the peculiarities of the socialist Yugoslav self-management system whose development took place in constant conflicts of political authority and critically oriented intelligentsia. The latter were under the strong influence of the West due to the openness of Yugoslavia. The focus is put upon the last critical decade of Yugoslavia after the death of Josip Broz Tito in 1980. The paper includes a wider overview on the problems of perception of self-management in the West and in the Yugoslav intellectual community as well as short insight into the economic and social issues related to self-management, especially in the period of severe crisis in the 1980s. The paper discusses the contributions of some of the leading international and Croatian experts such as Milton Friedman, Ljubo Sirc, Branko Horvat, Marijan Korošić, Slavko Goldstein and others.

Keywords: Self-management, Socialist Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito, Edvard Kardelj, Milton Friedman, Branko Horvat

AUTOGESTIONE SOCIALISTA TRA POLITICA ED ECONOMIA

SINTESI

L'articolo prende in esame le peculiarità del sistema jugoslavo di autogestione socialista, il cui sviluppo avvenne fra costanti conflitti tra le autorità politiche e il criticamente orientato ceto intellettuale. Quest'ultimo era fortemente influenzato dall'Ovest grazie al carattere aperto della Jugoslavia. L'accento viene posto sull'ultimo difficile decennio della Jugoslavia in seguito alla morte di Josip Broz Tito nel 1980. L'articolo include un ampio quadro dei problemi della percezione dell'autogestione nell'Occidente e nella comunità intellettuale jugoslava, nonché una breve panoramica delle questioni economiche e sociali legate all'autogestione, in particolare quelle del periodo della grave crisi degli anni '80. L'articolo esamina i contributi di alcuni dei principali esperti internazionali e croati, tra cui Milton Friedman, Ljubo Sirc, Branko Horvat, Marijan Korošić, Slavko Goldstein e altri.

Parole chiave: autogestione, Jugoslavia socialista, Josip Broz Tito, Edvard Kardelj, Milton Friedman, Branko Horvat

INTRODUCTION

The general erosion and disorientation of the working class – as it was viewed by the distinguished French intellectual André Gortz in the early 1980s in his book *Farewell to the Working Class*, came to the fore in a most unusual way in socialist Yugoslavia (Mason, 2016, 235).[1] In a country that was neither communist like the East nor a capitalist like the West, the position of workers was exceptional due to the system of self-management. Moreover, the self-governing society also promoted social property as the basic category of ownership (although there was also a private property).[2] In the case of Yugoslavia, the 1980s had a special significance. It was "a fatal decade"; not just for the status of the Yugoslav working class but the state itself. In words of the economist Vladimir Gligorov "*in order to understand the break-up of Yugoslavia, this is certainly the most important political and economic period*" (Gligorov, 2017, 414). In May 1980. Yugoslav president Josip Broz Tito passed away. With his death, the main integrative factor in Yugoslavia ceased to exist. All the antagonisms of the heterogeneous political, social and economic system spilled out on the surface. The important role had a national question.[3] National homogenization processes in interaction with severe economic crisis ultimately led to the collapse of a state that disappeared in the series of brutal wars in the first half of the 1990s.

The early 1980s were also the years of the outbreak of a severe economic crisis and the beginning of the end of the social experiment of workers' self-management in socialist Yugoslavia. The idea, designed at the beginning of the 1950s as the foundation of a peculiar Yugoslav pattern in communism, vanished during the eighties in a series of labor strikes and demands for radical political and social changes. In conditions of the crisis – "a permanent revolution" transformed into "a permanent crisis", very different ideas were developed in an attempt of finding the sustainability of the Yugoslav self-governing society. Due to the openness of the Yugoslav state, these ideas were under the strong influence of the West already in their formative phase at the beginning of the fifties, but also under the constant watchful eye of the party apparatus and control of the rigid state-bureaucracy. This outlandish position of Yugoslavia raises many questions, including the relationship to the particularity of self-management. What was the general impact of the West – including the intellectual interactions – and how did it reflect on the perception of self-management? What were the economic and social circumstances of the last decade of Yugoslavia and how they reflected on the destiny of self-management? What ideas are developing in the 1980s in considering the sustainability of the system of self-management? But, first of all,

1 Gortz work emerges after the defeat of the French left in 1978, and then under great change after the introduction of deregulation in the West in the early 1980s.

2 The legal system of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) distinguished two types of property: private property and social ownership. While private property owners were private individuals (physical persons) and some private legal entities called "civil legal entities" such as foundations, associations and religious communities, the socially owned property according to official doctrine did not have the owner.

3 Despite the proclaimed unity, immediately after the departure of the Yugoslav sovereign riots emerged in Kosovo in 1981; as one of the most exposed Yugoslav weak point, the "Kosovo question" become the main trigger for the spread of national antagonisms throughout Yugoslavia over the decade.

what was the workers self-management? How was it viewed in the West and what was the experiences and regards of the very participants of the system?

THE PERCEPTION OF YUGOSLAV SELF-MANAGEMENT

During a 1977 visit to Yugoslavia, the French socialist leader François Mitterrand observed that "*the Yugoslav communists were word drunk and that the term 'self-management' was used as a magic word which was believed to solve everything*" (NIN, 11. 5. 1977, in: Sirc, 1979, 244–245). The Mitterrand's observation was used as an argument by the economist Ljubo Sirc who pointed out that "*Yugoslav communist leaders will not accept that Marxist economics is fallacious*" so their usual response to the economic problems "*is manipulation of the words*"; the worst offender in this respect was the chief architect of self-management Edvard Kardelj, "*who has no sense of reality but juggles with words to the horror of all those who have to carry out his continuous 'innovations'*" (Sirc, 1979, 244–245).

If the socialist Mitterrand and the hard-line critics of Yugoslav socialist society didn't have too much compassion for the Yugoslav workers self-management one could be surprised with views of the guru of a liberal capitalism, Milton Friedman. In March and April 1973 Friedman gave two interviews to *Chicago Tribune*, before and after his trip to Yugoslavia. Friedman stated that Yugoslavia – in the economic sense – was "*one of the most fascinating places in the world*". Among the other arguments for this observation he gave a wider analysis of the concept of workers self-management. As an example of the functioning of self-management he presented a short "case study" on one factory he had visited during his stay in Zagreb (probably Nikola Tesla). Although he identified some controversies within the Yugoslav model (e.g. status of equity ownership) he also found some similarities with the American corporate enterprise. Speaking about the Yugoslav market economy and the social ownership – related to self-management – Friedman called the Yugoslav socialist system a "*capitalism without capitalists*". He considered Yugoslavia an open country especially in comparison to states of real socialism. His essay on the economy was published in Yugoslavia in early 1970 and he even claimed he had some disciples of his "open market" doctrine in Yugoslavia (Friedman, 1973a; Friedman, 1973b). In the phase of the agony of Tito's Yugoslavia in the late 1980s Friedman will also present a transitional model in the wake of reform efforts of the last Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Marković.

In any case, a Yugoslav precedent which did not impress Mitterrand, and attracted the attention of Friedman, was an interesting historical experiment. For years after the collapse of the Yugoslav state, sociologist Todor Kuljić observes that, in the historical sense,

> *Yugoslav self-management was an experiment created under the influence of various ideas: the heritage of the Paris Commune, the legacy of Serbian social democracies from the end of the nineteenth century, the legacy of anarchy, which was later important in the criticism of Stalinism* […] *the system of Yugoslav self-government was also a national, even supra-national laboratory* (Kuljić, 2005).

For one of the leading Yugoslav economists Branko Horvat, whose economic views developed in a strong interaction with the doctrines of the West, self-management was – "a silent world revolution" (interview NIN, 1984, in: Horvat, 1985, 73–81); essentially, it was "*the removal of hierarchical relations between people and the creation of a society of equal and free people*" (Horvat, 1985, 219).

One of the inconclusive evaluations of the Yugoslav self-management – given from the time distance – was an observation of the economic historian and political scientist Susan L. Woodward:

> *One might say that the Yugoslav (self-management) system was a mixture of liberal and socialist assumptions about economic behavior and goals for economic and political life. Organizationally, it was a hybrid, based on an idea of social-property rights that were simultaneously economical and political; its methods of allocating economic resources and of making and enforcing public choices relied on neither the competitive price mechanism of capitalist society nor the planning bureaucracy of statist society, but on the idea of democratic consultation and agreement among autonomous and self-interested but also cooperative property owners (governments and the work collectives with rights to manage social assets) on common rules for value and distribution* (Woodward, 1995, 173).

Even in the aforementioned examples, it is rather obvious that the Yugoslav model of worker self-management has caused very different reactions and controversial interpretations of various politicians, field experts, and intellectuals in general.

SELF-MANAGEMENT: PARTY AND INTELLIGENTSIA'S "CRITIQUE OF ALL EXISTING"

From the very beginning, self-management was a kind of strange social experiment developed under the auspices of the "authentic Yugoslav revolution". In years of formation of Yugoslavia after the split with Stalin, self-management was presented by its creators as a "*common law of the progress of socialism*" which will lead to the historical realization of "*Marxist ideal of an association of free producers*" (Kardelj, 1977, 10–11). According to Kardelj, the very idea of self-management was closely linked to self-liberation of working class:

> *The worker and the man, although burdened with the past and irrational motives, was supposed to rebel spontaneously and rationally against conditions in which he is a hired worker of the state or a passive instrument and a wheel in a bureaucratic-managed machine, or just the consumer whose salary is determined by the others* (Kardelj, 1977, 17).

From the practical political point self-management was, first of all, a plausible Marxist justification for the resistance to Stalin after the 1948 split; in words of Yugoslav

president Josip Broz Tito "*self-management had been – so to speak – forced on Yugoslavia*" (Borba, 9. 5. 1971, in: Sirc, 1979, 5). For the pragmatist Tito, who did not show any greater interest in deeper theoretical considerations, despite taking over the elements of a capitalist market economy (discussed by Milton Friedman) self-management was basically "*only a specific form of the dictatorship of the proletariat*" (Borba, 1. 12. 1973, in: Sirc, 1979, 231). Although he often reconsidered the practical problems of self-management development – as a supreme arbitrator of the Yugoslav society – Tito as the statesman valued the self-management primarily as a part of the unique Yugoslav legitimacy that provided him world reputation.[4]

Unlike his more idealist-oriented comrades who designed the concept of self-management, Tito always took care on the limits of "the proper line" in order to avoid any situation which would put into the question his personal power and the system he was maintaining (Pirjevec, 2012, 340–357). That certainly does not mean he was not a revolutionary. Speaking about the adoption of the Law on Workers' Self-Government at the National Assembly of the FNRJ on June 27, 1950, Tito's act of "handing over the factory to the workers" was accompanied by the announcement of the introduction of social property; at the same time he revealed the need of distance of the "party from the ruling machine" in order to avoid the coalescence of the communist avantgarde and state bureaucracy with the society (Bilandžić, 1985, 171–172).[5] In time, this radical act – followed by the opening up to the West – will create a more liberal atmosphere and provide a certain space for creative freedom, especially in the arts, culture, and science. The initiation of self-management, which also encompassed the intellectual spheres of social life also promoted various forms of social criticism. According to Dušan Bilandžić,

> *strong criticism of Stalinism and etatisme in Yugoslav theory and practice, with parallel unloosening the bureaucratic stalemate in all the cells of society – in the*

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4 There are many examples of the practical background and scope of self-management in Tito's perceptions. When Czech-Slovak workers began calling for the introduction of self-management towards the Yugoslav model during the Spring of 1968, Tito welcomed it. When Dubček announced the introduction of political pluralism, Tito tacitly accepted the Soviet intervention because of the fear of precedent which would put in question the communist authority and their political monopoly (although he was aware that Brezhnev's doctrine could easily turn onto Yugoslavia as well).

5 In the manners he led the liberation struggle of the people, Tito pointed out three points: 1. The process of state deprivation begins immediately (the act of handing over the factory to the workers). 2. Since the Communist Party is at risk of integrating with the state apparatus and thus transforming the Workers' Party into the KPJ forcing tool, it is decided that the Party will distance itself from the power of the apparatus and strengthen itself as a political party of its class. 3. The state form of property is only a temporary, initial and lowest form of socialist property. State property must be transformed into social ownership under direct management. The beginning of the process that will be based on these conceptual was confirmed by the act of handing over the factories to the workers. The Basic Law regulating the Workers Self-management in Socialist Yugoslavia was adopted by the National Assembly on January 13, 1953. In administrative regulation sense „the new economic system" peak was the Law on Associated Labor (colloquially called the „workers constitution) from 1976. The law was related to 1974 Yugoslav Constitution as a document on political and labor relations.

> *Party, mass organizations, work organizations – and it also allowed to break with the etatisme structures and abandon forms of coercion. It also allowed critique of everything existing. Such concepts were particularly pronounced in one part of the intelligentsia* (Bilandžić, 1985, 195).

Consequently, the self-management itself – as an origination for socialist democracy – has become a subject of study and criticism. It was a system of "controlled liberties" with clear boundaries. The concept of fraternity and unity, the Communist Party and Tito himself were not a suitable topic of deeper criticism.

However, the very fact of opening to the Western influences testifies about the certain self-confidence and the social cohesion of Yugoslav society at the time. There are many examples of interaction between Yugoslav and Western intelligentsia. In the foreword of his book *Growth with Self-Management,* American economist and university professor's John L. Moore writes: "*This study is an outgrowth of interest in workers self-management that dates to a visit in 1968–69 to the University of Virginia by professor Alexander Bajt of the University of Ljubljana. Profesor Bajt sparked my interest in the institutions of self-management and encouraged me to continue my studies of the system*" (Moore, 1980, Preface).

What were the limits of criticism and freedom (self-management), and who was the supreme arbitrator was soon revealed in the 1954 conflict at the party's top. The self-management was not overlooked in the confronting interpretations of socialist democracy. The demands of one of the closest Tito's associates Milovan Djilas – who began to advocate the freedom of political organizations of working people – were directly associated with self-governing freedoms. On the other side, expeditious – "*overwhelming changes in social relations*" – were not welcomed because they could jeopardize the process of building the democracy through the affirmation of self-management (Bilandžić, 1985, 197). Edward Kardelj's concluding criticism of Djilas's ideas was referred to the Yugoslav democratic self-managing alternative (versus bourgeois multi-party democracy):

> *I do not claim that we are very close to the realization of such a type of democracy, nonparty democracy, but we have laid a solid foundation for it in the social self-management mechanism. Further development of this mechanism means strengthening the leading influence of the working class at the head of all working masses – which is the main weapon against bureaucratic tendencies and against the negative phenomena in our system. There is no other* (Komunist, 1–2, 1954, 30, in: Bilandžić, 1985, 201).

Conflicts of opinion within the party about nature, the guidelines and the dynamics of the development of democratic processes and self-management paradigmatically indicated the general tendency of development of critical discourse. And it will continue to develop in different forms and in different currents until the collapse of the communist governance. Conflicts of ideology and critical thoughts, party bureaucracy and in-

telligentsia, manifested many controversies. The self-management as a system was the origination and the very subject of criticism at the same time. In self-management discussions, many economists, sociologists, political scientists, and philosophers warned of substantive self-management issues.[6] The *Praxis* movement criticized the particular form of socialist self-management implemented in Yugoslavia, arguing that the expansion of bureaucratic power in the Yugoslav economy was due to Yugoslav workers' self-management not being sufficiently radical. At the same time, due to the criticism, some of the authors were pronounced as a "*professional Anti-Communists*" and "*enemies of self-managing socialism*." The Yugoslav members of *Praxis* were connected with philosophers and social critics from the entire world. Together they attended the symposium on Korčula, so-called Korčula Summer School until 1974 when authorities disabled the release of *Praxis* magazine and the work of school (Lešaja, 2014).

Nevertheless, it was impossible to prevent and utterly disable the rapidly growing influence of intelligentsia. In liberal 1960s, some Yugoslav sociologists embarked on research on a disparity between the official doctrine and real situation. Some of the research led to the conclusion that self-management is just "unrealistic ideological projection", "the term which has lost its meaning" and "contradictio in adiecto" (Sirc, 1979, 173). The arguments were numerous: e.g. "*Formally, the workers in enterprises are given all power but they cannot exercise it and know that is so. First, their expectations were fanned, only to be deceived, which led to disillusionment and frustration*" (Sirc, 1979, 175). This type of scientific research annoyed party leaders. When, in 1975 four scholars at the Faculty of Sociology, Politics and Journalism in Ljubljana came up with a new work on self-management based on research carried out in several factories, their conclusions were discredited "as politically harmful". The whole episode got a public attention even in a foreign press (*The Times*). Veljko Rus and Janez Jerovšek along with two colleagues were accused of "*'technocratic liberalist deviation' but the whole university supported them, including party cell of their faculty*" (Sirc, 1979, 175; cf. Ramšak, 2019, 130–135). Assessing the criticism of economists and sociologists who claimed that the professional communist "*were making decisions on matters for which ultimately they did not carry any responsibility*" – "*Party representatives were acting like 'padres' to factories*", economist Branko Horvat gives the following observation on self-management in mid-1973 in *Economic Policy Magazine*: "*all that self-management consist is of hiring and firing. I do not exaggerate if I say that self-management has been liquidated. And since it is supposed to be a driving force of our economy, it can be said that our economic power is failing*" (Ekonomska politika, 16. 7. 1973, in: Sirc, 1979, 211). Horvat himself was one of the greatest advocates of labor self-management, but also a sharp critic of its shortcomings, to which he was tirelessly pointing out in his economic analysis.

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6 Thanks to Yugoslav educational policy (free education) and especially to cultural policy, despite some of the occasional retorsion certain forms of social criticism emerged that was unimaginable in the countries of real socialism. Due to such political climate, relatively large production of various scientific papers monitored and analyzed the social conditions including the problems of self-management (Topolčić & Murati, 1994).

If the observations of sociologists and philosophers – who devoted their thoughts to "critique of all existing" sometimes acted as an intellectual leisure (especially from the perspective of "direct producers"), an economic analysis was intractable. Architects of self-management have invested enormous efforts in attempts to align economical legitimacy and constructed ideological settings. This has led to many problems in understanding the system itself. Sometimes it seemed like Yugoslav self-management suffered from a "persistent incomprehension". One of the confusions over characterizing the Yugoslav system arose from the system's use of many "market elements". Actually, the very term *market* had varying meaning for different people and at different times. Most commonly, the *market* meant the operation of the "law of value" but it could also mean what Boris Kidrič called the "capitalist principles of accumulation". The same expression was also applied to decentralization and more autonomy (Woodward, 1995, 170–171). In mid-1966, Boris Kraigher acknowledged that the problems of foreign exchanges are rather complicated: "*I admit that, two years ago, I did not understand them as well as I do now, and that discussion helped all of us to learn about these things*". In meantime Yugoslav economy produced a trade deficit which reached about $ 4.4 billion in 1977 (Sirc, 1979, 168).

The system itself was faced with the consequences of many purely defined situations. One was the problem of payment and accumulation of debts due to the lack of responsibilities in property management. At the time of monetary stringency self-management enterprises could not pay their debts to each other because of liquidity and so they began to grant each other more and more credit. At the end of September 1975, economic organizations had claims amounting to more than 273 billion dinars (1975 GDP was 497 billion dinars) on customers and owned 262 billion dinars to banks (Sirc, 1979, 153, 155). There were calls to make bankruptcy, but doubts appeared about whether these institutions were compatible with self-management (Sirc, 1979, 157). Bankruptcy simply does not make sense under Yugoslav conditions; "*nobody loses the property, which is the main deterrent under capitalism, and the workers are deemed to have the right to work*". As previously stressed, they cannot be held responsible for the working of enterprise, as the investment decisions at least are caused by wrong decisions make themselves felt, while there can be no doubt that irrational investment is among the more important causes of losses (Sirc, 1979, 157).

However, Yugoslavia's main concern was unemployment. At the end of 1970s Yugoslav self-management system starting to lose its ability to provide an acceptable level of employment. In 1980 the unemployment rate was at 13,8% not counting around 1 million workers employed abroad. Deteriorating living conditions during the 1980s caused the Yugoslavian unemployment rate to reach 17 percent, while another 20 percent were underemployed. 60% of the unemployed were young people under the age of 25 (Petak, 2003; Woodward, 1995, 191–222). In the land of self-governing workers in which "*every member of the society has the right to work*", great unemployment and mass emigration were not only an economic and social "time bomb" but a clear indicator of the gap between the theory and practice of self-managing socialism. The years later, Branko Horvat will observe that "*the present great unemployment*

is an equally massive violation of socialist principles as well as the privatization of social property" (Horvat, 1989, 28–29). The path to a classless society has increasingly deepened its controversies. Unemployment, continued debt growth, low product competitiveness, inflationary tendencies – as well as organizational problems stemming from complicated self-management regulations – soon lead to total devaluation of work.

Working collectives were "tide up" with regulations and constantly exposed to interventions of state and political organs so much that none of the vital business decisions could be made independently (price formation, investment, income distribution, etc.). In the introduction of his book *Growth with Self-Management* J. H. Moore stated: "*It is impossible to understand the Yugoslav system of workers' self-management without appreciating the continuous change that has characterized it*". Moor gave "a graphic description" of what he ment by quoting "well-known Yugoslav economist Branko Horvat":

> *In the fourteen years covered (1952–65), every three brought a regulation issued at the level of the Administration or Parliament. In addition, the Federal economic secretariats and banks produced rules, orders, instructions, decisions and solutions (245 in 1965). When we take into account the regulations of the republics and localities, and subtract holidays and vacations from the time available, if follows that every working day brought some administrative pressure. State bodies, the National Bank, and the Social Accounting Service also have their internal regulations, they also change and, by the nature of things, even faster and more often than legislative acts* (Moore, 1980, 5).

Self-management began to stagnate and then rapidly regressed. Degradation of self-management manifested itself in the constant interventions of socio-political workers who predominantly occupied and managed all important positions in companies. An intricate system of self-governing acts that continuously subjected the economic reasoning to ideological canons had further complicated the functioning of self-management. According to research performed by sociologist Vladimir Arzenšek in the most developed Yugoslav Republic of Slovenia, in the late seventies, two-thirds of the workers did not participate in appointing candidates for self-governing bodies and delegations; confidence into the system and sense to just distribution of the results of work and relevant functions was exposed to constant erosion. Half of the surveyed workers argued that they had different interests from Union officials who was supposed to represent them. Until 1980, three-fifths of the workers were no longer members of the Union (Arzenšek, 1981, 4). Much earlier before critical 1980s economic conditions revealed structural problems of self-management. In words of Susan L. Woodward, "*the system no longer recognized unpropertied wage earners, either as a class or a status. The concept of labor as an actor separate from capital ceased to exist; the inefficiency of economy clarified that self-management was not, and never became, a system of workers' control*" (Woodward, 1995, 166).

THE CASTLES OF THEORY AND HUTS OF *PRAXIS* & THE STEAMROLLER OF SELF-MANAGEMENT

Like other aspects of the Yugoslav socialist society, self-management had its own stages. The constitutional period of the 1950s was marked by the constitutional law of 1953, which at the legislative level "*planned the democratization of society*". Based on "*Marx's idea of deprivation of state, democracy and self-management*", Yugoslavia had developed the distinctive idea of a path toward communism; along with the concept of non-alignment, self-management was imposed as a pivotal alternative to the Soviet matrix (Pirjevec, 2012, 398). However, the foreign-political legitimacy of the Yugoslav state through self-management – which has not remained unnoticed[7] – concealed serious internal problems. Different perceptions of the self-governing process led to many conflicts involving members of the communist authorities, intelligentsia and the workers themselves. In the book *New Class – Criticism of Contemporary Communism* from mid-fifties, a dissident Milovan Đilas has been prophetic on the problems that will accompany the development of self-management:

> *The Yugoslav so-called labor self-management, which in the time of conflict with Soviet imperialism was conceived as a far-reaching democratic measure that would deprive the party of monopoly of government, gradually falls to one of the partisan labor sector, powerless to shake, especially to change the existing system* [...] *no-one can decide on anything. The greatest benefits of the bestowed freedom were the donors themselves* (Đilas, 2009, 67).

This critical observation of one of the creators of the idea of self-management had, however, a reverse that would essentially mark the development of the Yugoslav model of socialism thanks to the "dogmatic-liberal" ambiguities of Titoism. As the primary ideological-political project designed at the top of the Party, self-management was imposed as a constraint, but at the same time the origin of political autonomy that fostered critical thinking unimaginable in other states in which the authorities were the communists. The 1960s marked rise of liberal tendecies, especially after the fall of the almighty secretary of the secret services Aleksandar Ranković in 1966, and self-management was a powerful generator of the overall changes of the Yugoslav society. According to the 1963 Constitution, two fundamental postulates have defined the position of citizens as "*free and equal producers and creators*"[8]: "*Social ownership of productive resources" and "the right to manage the entire process of social production,*

7 For example, Polish historian Andrzej Packowski states that from 1956 to 1957, "*The Yugoslav model of self-management – for a part of the Polish communists and the broader leftist – became evidence that socialism does not have to be centralized and bureaucratic, and that society can have an influence if not on the politics at least on the activity of a factory or mine*" (Jakovina, 2003, 630).

8 These aspects of self-managing postulates were defined in the Constitution of the SFRY (1963): Basic Principles, Section II, paragraphs 3, 4, 6; Section III, paragraph 1; Section IV, paragraph 2; Chapter II, Art. 6, Article 9, and others.

starting from management in its working organization to management in all political-territorial communities" (Drutter & Drutter, 1964, 145). The system should be regulated "*through various systems and mechanisms such as the system of market relations, the system of planning the direction of economic development, the distribution system, the investment system, the lending system, the budget and tax system, the international exchange system, etc.*"; According to the projections of the then ideologists, the very economic system was conceived as "*a set of actions of political superstructure on an economical base*" (Drutter & Drutter, 1964, 144–145).

The self-management, as already indicated, becomes subject to critical re-examination ranging from philosophy, law, economics, sociological and political studies to everyday praxis. But the real challenge was how to apply the self-managing concept in practice. The relevant example of attempts to harmonize theory and practice in self-management were the efforts of reforms-oriented Slovenian Communist Stane Kavčič. After the outbreak of the first great strike in Yugoslavia, organized by the miners in Trbovlje in early 1958, it was clear that there was substantial gap between the workers and the political elite which represented themselves as an "avant-garde" of the working class. The attempt to calm the miners by the prominent social-political worker Miha Marinko, who was born in Trbovlje, ended with a fiasco when he came to his mission with the Mercedes, which "*only raged the miners*" (Pirjevec, 2012, 425). Tito himself condemned the strike as an obstruction organized by the "imperialist forces" and "enemy elements"; the use of force was also considered. The conflict was patch up by the President of Slovenia's Executive Council Stane Kavčič who managed to get higher coal price and higher wages (Pirjevec, 2012, 425–426).

Confrontation of the views and the course of implementation of self-management was expressed in the latent conflict by two currents within the communist party; the one who generally advocated an "administrative approach" – above all the role of the central government, and, on the other hand, the liberal-reformer line (in accordance with the conclusions of the VI Congress of the SKJ). The latter advocated the strengthening of the Republican (national) and lower levels of decision-making. Such tendency provoked Serbian writer Dobrica Ćosić to raise the question of future course of Yugoslav self-management development: "*Should Yugoslavia persist in its self-management experiment which foresees self-government, and therefore the autonomy of the republic, or should be developed in the partisan tradition of brotherhood and unity?*" (Ćosić, 2001, 216, in: Pirjevec, 2012, 459). For Stane Kavčič Yugoslavia could not survive "*without the Scandinavian type of socialism*" (Pirjevec, 2012, 472). In his exhaustive review of current problems of self-management in the mid-sixties – titled Self-management, Kavčič has critically tackled numerous issues of political and economic praxis and everyday life: the role of bureaucracy in obstruction of self-management development, youth socialist education, social role of intellectuals, workers' rights, the relationship between democracy and the economy, and even the position of Roman Catholicism in Slovenia and current political situation in the Vatican (Kavčič, 1964–1967). For Kavčič, the revolution was a process that could not be seen from the "*black and white*" perspective and interpret in the dogmatic manners and on "*a priori assumptions*". To ideological propaganda, he opposed

the critical thinking, "*rejecting prejudice, routine and mold*" (Kavčič, 1964, 5). According to the canons of the Yugoslav concept of socialist democracy, he rejected the political pluralism of the Western type by relying on a direct democracy of self-management. In his point of view "*knowledge and culture*" and "*freedom of action*" played an important role in the development of self-management society (Kavčič, 1967, 217). Kavčič represented the younger generations of liberal-oriented communists who were generally in favor of rooting reforms, "*introducing market principles, decentralization and accelerating self-management in social life*" (Pirjevec, 2012, 490).

Despite the national differences, the common goal of the Yugoslav reformers of the 1960s was the restoration of the entire economic structures, which implied "*deep political and ideological transformation.*" The results of "liberalization" – the opening up to the market economy – have been shown in a series of economic and social developments, despite the problem of increasingly pronounced foreign borrowing (in the mid-sixties the foreign debt reaches more than one billion and two hundred thousand dollars). The average economic growth rate was the third in the world (7.2% per annum), while the lag behind Europe fell from 4 to 2,5 times. In the era of industrialization, Yugoslavia was at the top of the world scale, in line with Japan. It also promoted a new economic branch, tourism, whose income was about $ 100 million a year. Accelerated growth has also reflected on the standard. The National Income of the 1960s reached $ 500 per capita with a growth trend (1970 rose to $ 860). In the same period, health, education and science were evolving. There were also differences among the republics and different parts of Yugoslavia; in Slovenia, the average GDP per capita was approximately $ 1,550, which was five times more than the most undeveloped part of Yugoslavia, Kosovo (Pirjevec, 2012, 491–492, 523).

Such an economic and political trend was interrupted by the mass purge of the reformists and liberals in Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia in 1971–1972. Reform-oriented communists were removed from the political scene although many among them honestly believed in a self-managing project. A purge opened up a space for reaffirmation of conservatives who had different ideas of the dynamics and the way of applying self-management. In that sense, 1970s were the key years that determined the fate of the Yugoslav self-management experiment. Despite the 1974 Constitution and the 1976 Associated Work Act (ZUR), which in some aspects exceeded the expectations of reformists, the human resources were devastated and spontaneous spirit of the Liberal Sixties had been interrupted. The consequence was strengthening of the influence of the Communist Party and the administration. Meanwhile, economic and social problems multiplied (economic stagnation and setback, unemployment, debt growth in Yugoslavia, world economic disorder due to the oil crisis in 1973 and 1979).

The Party responded to a growing crisis with "more self-management", stipulating how the process should take place. By the end of the seventies, a massive normative framework and an administrative apparatus were developed. It assumed that "*all working people of the socialist self-management democracy*" in the exercise of their "*rights, freedoms and duties should be informed and directed to the greatest extent to the legal system, that the Constitution and laws are their tools in achieving their constitutional*

position in joint-work, in the local and interest community and in the municipality". The magnitude of this intervention could be a review in the 1979 edition titled *My Rights, My Duties* which consisted of 1339 pages of the text on the Constitution and the laws passed until March 1979. Printed in the form of a popular edition of the *Legal Advisor* it was intended for "a working man and citizen" who should be informed about their rights and duties. The idea of the functioning of a socialist self-managing system was based on an imperative assumption – "*the system assumes and requires*" – that "*every working man is self-governer who, in conjunction with his socially useful work, manages the results of his work and social resources in his personal and his social interest, and that, by exercising political authority, makes self-governing and political decisions*" (Hrženjak, 1979, XIII). About 1,25 to 1,5 million legal acts have been adopted for the implementation of the ZUR at all levels of social activities. This fact speaks for itself about the legal and formal gigantism of the system. According to Dušan Bilandžić, each Basic Organization of Associated Work had to bring about thirty general legal acts that most often included five hundred to one thousand pages of legal norms (Bilandžić, 1999, 680, in: Kovačić, 2016, 69).

One of the consequences of continuing efforts of "polishing" the self-management with the theoretical-ideological tools was the hyperinflation of intellectual contribution. As noted in a 1974 article entitled "*Theoretical castles and huts of praxis*", by the distinguished publicist Veselko Tenžera, "*Gulliver of theory and Lilliput of praxis become the general feature of the time we live in. On the course of what is not yet, to what will be, there are entire libraries of theoretical projects that are waiting for their builders*" (Tenžera, 1988, 176). The numerous issues on self-management in the seventies harmoniously fit Tenžera's observation. The whole libraries with the most diverse works of Yugoslav intellectuals and publicists followed the development of self-management. The distinguished socio-political workers, social and humanistic intelligentsia have participated in a huge project of scientific support to a peculiar Yugoslav way to communism; e.g. series of publications from the mid-seventies devoted to the study of Marxist theory and socialist practice based on the lectures issued by the political school "Josip Broz Tito" (in Tito's birthplace Kumrovec). The edition was dedicated to "ideological-political education of workers". Promotion of the edition followed several years after the 1974 shutdown of Praxis, the most prestigious humanities magazine with the international reputation, whose highly critical discourse of communist practice by the prominent communist intellectuals did not fit into the party-controlled development of self-governing society.

Despite the persistence of the critical discourse during the 1970s the question of "practice" was predominantly back under the aegis of theoreticians of Marxism and political ideologues. Thus, in one of the works of the indicative title "*Socialist Self-management Democracy as a Special Form of Dictatorship of the Proletariat*", future of the socialist development had been presented in the most optimistic tones in the assessment of self-management: "*It should be emphasized that self-management is not taught in courses but in the practice itself and in self-management self-relations*"; "*the obstacles that come from the remaining monopolistic-usurpatory tendencies will be removed by the steamroller of self-management that is growing and increasing its strength, and the appearance of personal indifference and indolence will be self-defeating*" (Hadži Vasilev, 1977, 43). The

high expectations of party ideologues and theoreticians of self-management did not fit the reality. It seems that "human nature" – inclined to experiment like self-management – equally expressed the obstruction of the ideas it advocated. In the twilight of the Yugoslav socialist state, sociologist Mladen Lazić concluded that Yugoslavia is governed by an elite composed of "*two strata of the ruling class*": political leaders (senior class) and directors (lower layer of class). For Lazić, these social conditions – it was important to be "in position" – was the "system category". In contrast to capitalism in which

> *the ruling class is continually acting under the rigors of spontaneous economic demands, i.e. market laws, and, structurally, it must obey in some way the instrument of these laws* [...] *in socialism, the ruling class assumed even the role played by spontaneous laws in capitalism. The ruler class is a full-time organizer, manager, planner, evaluator of the whole social reproduction* (Danas, 18. 10. 1988, 36).

This observation of Yugoslav reality was diametrically opposed to the proclaimed principles of self-management as well as a market promoted by the specific Yugoslav model.

One of the recent studies of functioning of self-management in the real sector – *'Janko Gredelj', the Rolling Stock Factory* – showed that the concept of "collective worker"[9] simply did not function in its immediate base:

> *Analysis of the effects of blue-collar workers in the self-management bodies shows that they were not really managing the company. However, it is important to stress that those workers did not care so much to actually manage the Factory. Blue-collar workers were mainly interested in 3–4 basic issues: personal income, the question of housing, issues of labor resorts, business hours. They were primarily interested in improving their personal status and living standard, and the questions in the sphere of business were not their primary focus* (Mihaljević, 2015).

The self-management steamroller did not function properly in solving the problem of differences and demands for professional skills or managerial posts within the self-management organization. According to one study from the 1970s, "*the percentage of senior management qualifications in economy does not correspond to the needs of modern technique, technology and organization*"; in 1970 the Serbian economy (similar situation was in other republics with the exception of Slovenia to some extent), "*40 percent of the managerial positions are held by people who do not have qualifications for such places. If the executive managers were to be involved, the percentage would climb to 60 percent*" (Čalić, 1975, 75). The reported data point out a serious

9 "*Self-management means that a 'collective worker', that is, every individual as an integral part of a 'combined staff', participates in a certain way in organizing, controlling the work process, controlling its performance and deciding on the results of work*" (Čalić, 1975, 81).

discrepancy in "social structures" and the general problem of distribution of "social power" within joint-work organization. Some studies have shown that the strategy of "*introducing self-management from the outside*" not only disallowed the articulation of workers' interests and the elimination of conflicting interests but pointed out that "*the problem of egalitarian use of power is simply unsolvable*" (Županov, 1985, 12). Such observations can be linked to the current problems of employment of young qualified and educated people of post-war generations who protested due to their status and general social conditions in the state (in "rebellious" 1968 the number of students was around 200,000). In the same period, the emergence of "temporary work" abroad further weakened the Yugoslav economy; up to 1964 outside of the SFRY border 100,000 Yugoslav took temporary jobs, and in late 1973, almost four times more – 398,700 (Čalić, 1975, 105).

The problems of development of self-management were also related to the emergence of the so-called technocrats and technomanagers (tehnomenađeri). In the 1970s fight against this "social deviation" would become the mantra of the (self)-criticism of the ruling class. In the words of ideologically oriented theorists at the time, technocracy was the problem of influence of the alieneted expert management who obstructed "*the essential elements of a self-governing decision represented in the dialectical unity of the goal and the way of achieving the goal*". The research of some of the self-management theory experts at the beginning of the seventies revealed "*that the work unit exists and can realize its socio-economic role as much as it can decide on the overall conditions of its work*"; at the same time, it was observed that "*from the very first days of self-management, the alienation of producers from the whole of labor conditions empirically manifested itself as a demand for 'delimitation' of governing and management*"; the general problem of the relationship between "man and machine" and the relationship between technically trained and unskilled self-governed workers were apostrophised as technocracy deviation: "*Too often technocracy is characterized by any subordination to the demands of the immediate process of work. As if self-management is supposed to be saved from production!*" (Šeat-Lasić, 1972, 114–115). Tito himself often recalled the "*dangers coming from the bureaucrats and technocrats*" (for example, speaking in Sarajevo in 1969), warning that "*they want to take over the monopoly position, and to push 'direct producers' back to the position of rent workers*" (Pirjevec, 2012, 589).[10]

As a particularly problematic phenomenon for the ruling class was emergence of technomanagers, who, paradoxically, often came from the ranks of prominent socio-political workers. In the early stages of empirical monitoring of the development of self-management, such as researches conducted by the Department of Political and Le-

10 In later Tito's public appearance, after 1971, criticism of anarcho-liberalism, elitism and the like had been added to technocracy (Pirjevec, 2012, 597). For example, in a speech on 30 September 1975 in Prijedor, he referred to the need to protect the working class from "*technocrats, profiteers and university professors who spoiled youth with the western ideas*" (Pirjevec, 2012, 595). Of course, it should be noted that the emergence of critically oriented intelligentsia would not be possible without Tito's approval, which points to – essentially – ambivalent features of Titoism as a system of governance and social values.

gal Sciences of the Institute of Social Sciences in Belgrade, the phenomenon of technomanagers was not specifically recognized as a significant social deviation (Velimirović, 1962, 114–119). During the period of the liberalization of the 1960s, the "emancipation" of the director from the political elite has been registered and their transformation into a separate ("managerial") group. While the sixties created the "*motivational basis for accepting the directors' function by highly educated experts*", after 1971, a "strong" antitehnocracy campaign was launched;[11] it "*reaffirmed the leadership function as a political function and returned our 'managers' as a group to the position of the 'younger partner' of the political bureaucracy*" (Županov, 1985, 13).

This general picture of intertwining of the "liberal-market" and imposed bureaucratic party-state concept of self-management was expressed in many critically oriented studies that were not deprived of national connotations and controversies. Thus, economist Hrvoje Šošić in 1970 raised the question of "financial capital", bank control and lending – in particular the distribution of foreign exchange and the role of large export companies, such as Generalexport (Šošić, 1970, 111). The issue of import and export and the role of technomanagers in large companies such as Genex, Astra, INA and others was particularly delicate since the very outset of the Yugoslav foreign trade was linked to engagement of the Yugoslav secret services; furthermore, the leading posts were, as a rule, reserved for the prominent socio-political workers (Dedijer, 1984, 462–463). The emergence of Yugoslav products on overseas markets, with the central role played by managers, represented "*the possibility of all kinds of dirty business*": The socialist market economy did not have "*the same control as a company in the West, which resulted in lack of discipline and despoilment, unseen in Yugoslavia since the time of Karađorđević. Companies irresponsibly borrowed everywhere and the state soon found itself in a major foreign trade deficit and had the highest rate of inflation in Europe*." According to some data, Yugoslav managers have transferred substantial financial resources ($ 4 billion) to overseas companies, and some used those funds to "*establish new companies under their own name*" (Pirjevec, 2012, 590). This trend will continue until the fall of the Yugoslav state and even after.[12]

An interesting example of the difficulties of application of self-management appeared in sports. After the adoption of ZUR in 1976 documents related to sports set up "*the foundations of self-managing organization so the working people in the joint-work directly master the entire activity in physical culture and sport*"; in particular, "*it was necessary to affirm amateurism as a basis for the development of sport and to overcome the tendencies of professionalism and to prevent privatization in the use of social resources*" (Kovačić, 2016, 70). The emergence of professionalism, especially in football – which

11 According to the Edvard Kardelj, SKJ was threatened to be "*separated from its own class base and to plummet to the level of an insignificant pendant of bureaucracy under the influence of managers*" (Pirjevec, 2012, 589).

12 Few years before the break-up of the Yugoslav state the Minister of Finance of Switzerland stated that the Yugoslavs had "*almost 13 billion dollars on the non-interest-bearing accounts of Swiss banks*" (Pirjevec, 2012, 612). Although he didn't state about the origin of cash deposits (probably it included the savings of temporary workers abroad, firms etc.), some of these funds were linked to the financial malversations of the Yugoslav economic and political elite.

brought great financial resources, was a challenge to authorities who declaratively advocated "*overcoming technocratic relations and disabling technomanagers and commercialization of physical culture*"; in practice, the most prominent members of the political elite were the carriers of these tendencies.[13] The existence of black funds, various financial malversations in club operations, and numerous affairs such as the bribing of judges, had little to do with the "*mastering of workers with expanded reproduction*". As Kovačić concludes, "*the transformation of football professionals into joint-work has been slow or most commonly has not even come to life*" (Kovačić, 2016, 92).

Demands for the liberation of the economy from party patronage and the struggle against nepotism and corruption in the highest political and economic circles (which in the early 1970s had national connotations in Croatia and Slovenia) was not easy to distinguish from the general position of the managers within the liberal reformers ranks as well. As noted by Jože Pirjevec, the "liberal" managers were not immune to the challenges of prosperity under the auspices of the liberalization and market orientation: "*It is no coincidence that in 1971, when they saw the change, more than 130 directors fled overseas where they had 'their companies'*" (Pirjevec, 2012, 590). The clash with the liberal reformists – which was presented as the struggle against technocracy as a self-managing deviation – did not stop corruption nor prevented the erosion of self-management. The consolidation of democratic centralism at the Second Party Conference in January 1972 and the proclamation of the proletarian dictatorship – which must "*rule on political planning and economics*" – was a blank letter on paper. In 1977, one year after the adoption of the ZUR, the SKJ working group and the Federal Executive Council found that in the previous year "*a third of all basic organizations of associated labor could not provide simple reproduction and did not achieve any dinar of accumulation*" (Pirjevec, 2012, 612).

One of the most concise observations of the key 1960s and 1970s was given by the American expert for Socialist Yugoslavia, Dennison Rusinow:

> *Reforms were quickly dropped by the politicians who only half-listened to their economic advisers, so they set it aside and left behind all that was hot, controversial but crucial issues such as – the allocation of former federal funds and liabilities. This problem of policy design was hampered by the poor and partial implementation of reforms, the inability of many companies to adapt to the changed rules and market conditions, and unfavorable trends on the world market at that time. The result was – enlargement and extension of the problems in the transition period to the new system. There was an increase in unemployment, a high inflation rate, taxes pulled out more than expected, rising emigration rates, general economic stagnation, and holes in the budget were scrapped only thanks to tourism and labor payments from abroad and only, therefore, there was no major disaster* (Rusinow, 2012, 52–53).

13 Professionalism in football was accepted only for the highest degree of competition – the First Yugoslav National League, according to the *Social Agreement on the Basic of Self-management Organizing* (Kovačić, 2016, 72).

1980s – SELF-MANAGEMENT ENDGAME

Even prior to Tito's death in 1980, the hypertrophied communist apparatus did not represent a political force that could implement necessary social reforms and reconcile the increasingly apparent differences between the developed and underdeveloped sections of the country and the latent national antagonisms. On the top of the national confrontations, chronical economic inefficiency came to the fore; the deepening economic and social crisis put in question the very system of Yugoslav self-management socialist society.[14] At the beginning of 1980s Yugoslavian economy started to face with severe internal and external conditions. International Monetary Fond claimed from the federal government to accommodate to the fact of extreme external debt, by reducing the costs of labor and diminishing public consumption (in 1991 Yugoslavia had about $ 20 billion of external debt) (Rajšić, 2014). Actually, "*Yugoslavia practically went bankrupt in 1981–1982 because it was unable to pay back its foreign debt*" (Gligorov, 2017, 432).

Governments of Milka Planinc (1982–1986) and Branko Mikulić (1986–1989) renegotiated the foreign debt at the price of introducing the policy of *stabilization* which in practice consisted of severe austerity measures – the so-called shock treatment. And what effects did it have? In thirty-two out of the forty-two years between 1949 and 1990 the primary goal of all of the Yugoslav Governments in the annual economic resolution was external stabilization; and, as the economist Kiril Miljovski wrote in 1983, "*unemployment is a direct consequence of the idea by which every stabilization begins with restrictions in employment regardless of the effects for economic growth*" (Woodward, 1995, 223). Rising debts, unemployment, inflation along with the common erosion of any authority led to severe protests and series of strikes throughout Yugoslavia. During the 1980s, Yugoslav population endured the introduction of fuel limitations (40 liters per car per month), limitation of car usage to every other day, severe restrictions on the import of goods and paying of a deposit upon leaving the country (mostly to go shopping). There were shortages of coffee, chocolate, toilet paper, washing powder and so on. During several dry summers, the government, unable to borrow to import electricity, was forced to introduce power cuts. Throughout the country, inflation was causing unprecedented growth in prices, while legally preparing a field for economic reform. The general resentment and feeling of uncertainty led to a thorough re-examination of sustainability of the Yugoslav system.

A brief overview of the media in 1987 illustrates the political and social conditions in Yugoslavia which directly influenced the sustainability of self-management. Commenting the crisis in 1987 journalist of weekly *Danas* Jelena Lovrić notes that "*due to economic backwardness in comparison to Europe*" Yugoslavia "*has fallen to the low pre-war*

14 One of the leading Yugoslavian economist for that time, Slovene from Ljubljana, Aleksander Bajt, showed in his important analysis from mid 1980s that the performances of Yugoslav semi-market system were weaker than those performed in comparable Western and South European countries. Comparing efficiency of investments between Yugoslavia and countries like Portugal, Spain, Ireland, Greece and Turkey, he concluded that Yugoslav system showed the worst level of efficiency (Bajt, 1985).

branches"; she also points out that "*the ghost of inter-ethnic divisions circulates with Yugoslavia*" and that there is "*a deep gap of misunderstanding between leadership and peoples*" (Danas, 29. 12. 1987, in: Hrvatska revija, 1988, 84). The anti-inflation program of the government of Branko Mikulić promoted in November 1987 was probably the crudest attempt to curb the crisis. Measures were supposed to freeze the prices, limit earnings and spendings. In addition, devaluation of the dinar was carried out. Mikulić's measures faced a sharp resistance, especially in Slovenia and to a lesser extent in Croatia (none of 120 points of Mikulić's Anti-inflation program received a passing grade in Slovenia and Croatia). Freezing the prices for the purpose of curbing inflation was only partially implemented, reflecting the deterioration of living standards, especially within the poorest social strata. The particularly bad impact on social conditions had an inflation that reached 200% in 1988 (Ramet, 2010, 361).

The conditions of inflation, freezing of wages and other measures did not equally reflect on all social layers of the population. The *Danas* writes: "*It is obvious that inflation is beneficial for some, certainly for the etatisme and political bureaucratic structures*" (Danas, 24. 11. 1987, in: Hrvatska revija, 1988, 82). It also notes that "*there are 31,000 people employed in social and political organizations and in the entire fisheries sector only 4,750.*" There are 67,000 people employed in coal production and coal mines but only 15,000 of them are miners; all other were officials and semi-disabled. In self-managing interest communities, which are redundant, because they are parallel to state administration bodies, works 18,000 people, which is more than the number employed in coal mines. In all republics and provinces, except in Croatia, Slovenia and partly in Serbia, there are more employees in social-political organizations than in scientific research. According to some estimates, there was approximately 30% more bureaucracy than needed on the Yugoslav level (Tanjug, 20. 10. 1987, in: Hrvatska revija, 1988, 83). Sociologist Slaven Letica notes that the social conditions in Croatia led to a deep social rift in certain social structures: "*There are a few people who, in terms of reputation, power and money (usually one goes with other) stand out. These are various managers, political and diplomatic elites, people from the show business, a part of scientific workers*." Letica estimates the number of privileged social layers at 15,000 to 20,000. On the other hand, "*there is about 700,000 chronically poor, the people without any chance to improve their position, they have very low income and social status*" (Slobodna Dalmacija, 29. 6. 1987, in: Hrvatska revija, 1988, 81).

Such a political, economic and social conditions had to reflect the functioning of the self-management. According to the original idea, all social problems should be addressed in self-management organizations – "*all power derived from the working people*", but it was rather "*clear – even to the children – that self-management does not work if it has ever functioned*" (Danas, 18. 8. 1987, in: Hrvatska revija, 1988, 85). The more pressing economic problems hit hardest the workforce which increasingly showed their dissatisfaction. *Danas* paraphrased a popular slogan "*Comrade Tito, we swear to you we will never get off your way*" into "*Comrade Tito, we swear to you that we can not do this anymore*" (Danas, 17. 11. 1987, 21). The workers' problems became apparent especially in the outbreaks of many strikes which clearly manifested the crisis of the entire self-

-management system. *Danas* warns that in the period from 1982 to 1986 the number of workers' protests increased from 83 to 383 (in Croatia from 65 to 120 protests) (Danas, 22. 12. 1986).

Theoretically, the phenomenon of strikes in Yugoslavia was absurd (if they occurred they were qualified as "the stoppages of work").[15] De facto, strikes were not in accordance with the Constitution and the Law because workers as self-managers were actually the owners of factories and social property, so it seemed meaningless to strike against themselves. Yugoslavia signed Convention of the International Labor Organization moreover according to which the strikes were supposed to be the legal way of expressing dissatisfaction but in Yugoslav case strikes were absurd. As notice in *Danas* "*It is remarkable that the Unions in Croatia – who have lost contact with the working class a long time ago – have even expressed the view that striking right should not be regulated by the law because it is inappropriate to the essence of our constitutional system*" (Danas, 18. 8. 1987, in: Hrvatska revija, 1988, 85). As labeled by one of the participants of Labin miners strike in the spring of 1987 this gap between the theory and praxis and the state of constant confusion with no clear idea how to improve the conditions meant "the beginning of the end" (Lowinger, 2010, 65).

During the 1987 around 1,500 strikes took place in Yugoslavia and about 250,000 workers were participated (Tanjug, 22. 12. 1987, in: Hrvatska revija, 1988, 85). This trend continued at the even greater intensity in 1988. Waves of strikes that were held in continuity in the first half of 1988 had its peak in a strike of workers of the "economic giant" of Borovo, which employed more than 22,000 workers (Hrvatski državni arhiv, 2018). Affected by inflation and savings measures as well as announcement that thousands of workers who make "*technological surplus of employees*" will be fired they decided to strike (Filipović Grčić, 2015).[16] After the protest in Vukovar in early July 1988, workers of Borovo went to Zagreb and finally went in large numbers to the Federal Assembly of SFRY in Belgrade, demanding their rights and acceptable social changes (Ivčić, Nekić & Račić, 2014, 6–23; Cvek, Ivčić & Račić, 2015, 7–34; Lowinger, 2010, 79–91). The Belgrade protest was one of the most massive statements of workers' dissatisfaction in the history of Yugoslav socialism and showed the defeat of economic and social policy based on ideological rather than real economic parameters. The fact that workers were formally the "owners" of Borovo and that they were supposed to make decisions as self-managers simply didn't mean anything. In short, Yugoslavia was rapidly declining due to its controversies. In this context, it is interesting to note that despite the parallel emergence of nationalism, workers in strikes expressed their workers' solidarity irrespective of nationality. In a study on social upheaval in Yugoslavia in the 1980s, Jake Lowinger showed that among the workers on strikes "*interethnic cooperation in Yugoslavia was not only thinkable but quite normal*" (Lowinger, 2010, 144). According to Lowinger as well as to some other studies

15 According to another source, the number of striking participants from 1980 to the end of August 1988 was 211,367 (Jovanov, 1989).

16 By 1990, the number of workers declared "technological surplus" was 6,000.

conducted in Croatia "*as much as 93% of the strike reports as a cause of the strike initiate problems related to wages, followed by management problems (64%) and cost of living (37%). Only 1% of all reports mention national tensions*" (Lowinger, 2010, 41; Ivčić, Nekić & Račić, 2014).

Gradual abolishment of the self-management system started by the end of 1988 when federal government under the leadership of new Prime Minister Ante Marković came in the power. Forced with the challenge of radical reforms Marković gave top priority to a privatization of public-sector firms by an introduction of capital markets and other economic institutions associated with the notion of capitalism. By 1989, the Law on Changes and Amendments to the Enterprise Act on July 7, 1989 – written to encourage foreign investments, gave managers full rights to hire and fire labor and practically erased the system of self-management. One case study on factory Borovo reveals how self-management cease to exist. The collapse of the self-management could be illustrated with headlines in *Borovo journal*: "*Working in Exceptional Circumstances*" (Borovo, 18. 3. 1988), "*No employment*" (Borovo, 30. 6. 1989) and "*Who needs self-management?*" (Borovo. 14. 10. 1988) (all quations from Borovo journal in: Cvek, Ivčić & Račić, 2015, 20). The degradation of self-management clearly manifested itself in the inability of the Workers Councils to influence any major decisions.

The members of the workers' council complained that the director orders overruled their decisions, leading to a question of the sole meaning of their work. Business and salary discussions took place at Workers Councils, although these decisions have already been made outside the self-management circle. The new registration of the Borovo as a complex enterprise on July 1, 1989, and the adoption of the "Law on Enterprises" from July 1989 practically meant the elimination of self-management and strengthening the power of business management. The executives switched their managing status from "coordinator" to "control function". Workers' Council was exempted from the decision-making process. It is interesting that this change was presented as "*the ultimate range of self-management*". This also points out another paradox. While legislative changes actually abolished the self-management at the same time it was presented as a mean of legitimacy. Self-management, in which the various structures of authority were called upon, actually became emptied of its original meaning (Cvek, Ivčić & Račić, 2015, 20).

ECOMONISTS VS POLITICS IN 1980s – CONTEMPLATING ON THE DESTINITY OF SELF-MANAGEMENT

One of the most interesting examples of a critical relationship to the problems of socialist self-management was the work of economist Branko Horvat. Horvat was a chronicler and analyst of self-managing socialism. As a convinced socialist, he deeply believed in the feasibility of socialist ideals, primarily in a socialist democracy, closely related to functional self-management: "*Accurately speaking, self-managing – or associative – socialism is a pleonasm; because either there is self-management or there is no socialism*" (Horvat, 1976, 144). As an advocate of self-management, he was one of the sharpest

critics of the political system, which, according to his judgment had led to stagnation in 1968, and then to the intense collapse of self-managing socialism. When "*after two years of futile struggle he realized that he could no longer act effectively as an economist*", at the end of 1970 he resigned to all his functions. Horvat considered that was a critical period for self-management development: "*The Federation started to break up accompanied with economic and political irresponsibility instead of democratizing the country and its orientation towards political freedom and the rights of citizens*" (Horvat, 1989, 5). Nevertheless, he joined a group of economists – who at the invitation of the Federal Executive Council – did another, "*the last attempt to prevent the destruction of the economy*". The result was a memorandum under the title of *Economical Function of the Federation,* popularly called *The White Book* (the document was based on the ideas applied by the late 1980s).

However, the economic analysis of experts has been neglected. In Horvat's words "*a system known as the* negotiating economy *as a correlation to the etatisme-conceived system was invented in Brioni*". After the fall of Croatia's spring and the "liberals" in Serbia, repression has been re-introduced in the country since 1972. Pro-reform and pro--democracy oriented party members as well as the ordinary individuals – especially from the ranks of humanistic intelligentsia have been disrupted and exsposed to repression. As an economist, Horvat warned, "*that the country was pushed to the path of disaster*". After the reaction of the Public Prosecutor's office, his activities at the University were suspended. When "*it became clear that the destructive forces are so strong that nothing else is to be done*", he is decided to go abroad. However, he does not give up on the idea of socialism. He travels around the world and visits – "*practically every country where something important in connection with socialism was tried*": "*I wanted to find out where socialism went wrong, is it possible and how to achieve it?*" (Horvat, 1989, 5).

In his 1980s works, which, thanks to the openness of Yugoslavia, enabled a broad comparative insight into contemporary trends in economic science, he articulated the multidisciplinary – even philosophical – reflection on socialism. The result of his broad research was the book *Political Economy of Socialism*, published in 1982 in New York and Oxford, and just two years later in Zagreb (Horvat, 1984). At the suggestion of the American Society of Economists, Horvat's book was nominated for the Nobel Prize in 1983. Although his work was not finally awarded, the book was proclaimed in America as a book of the year (Grčar, 2016). In his book, he came to the conclusion "*that this socialism could not be taken as a historical failure – because there was no socialism yet. Under the name of socialism, the etatism and the omnipotence of the state were concealed, and that is exactly the opposite of socialism*" (Horvat, 1989, 6).

In *ABC of Yugoslav Socialism* (1989) Horvat exhaustively referred to the key problems of non-functioning of self-management, proving that the Yugoslav political elite with its ideological approach actually destroyed the system that was invoked:

> *On the basis of the 1974 Constitution and the ZUR, Yugoslavian companies were broken down into constituent parts. Like so much in the short history of the Yugoslav state, this has been done through violent methods. No expert critique is tolerated.*

Scientists were not allowed to talk about the problems, and anyone who warned of the consequences was proclaimed an enemy. At the time of this incursion on the enemy, I publicly asked to give me the title of a worthy enemy of Yugoslavia. This request is still not out of date. Those with managing functions who opposed the destruction of their companies were punished by the Party and removed from their positions as 'technocratic-elements' (Horvat, 1989, 31).

As the curiosity of the government's relationship to economic science which wanted to study self-management, Horvat illustrates with the case of an attempt of registration of the International Organization for the Economy of Self-Government in Dubrovnik in 1978. The Secretariat of Internal Affairs in Zagreb denied the registration "*with an explanation that such associations cannot be registered in Yugoslavia*" ("*After that, it almost happened that the self-management association was registered in Switzerland!*"). As another curiosity, Horvat states that a Ph.D. program in the economics of self-management could be enrolled at Cornell University in America, but not at the University of Zagreb. Concerning the relationship of authority and science towards self-management, Horvat concludes: "*So, instead of scientifically based socialist self-management, we got political vulgarization expressed in ZUR and other regulations and in political practice that led to self-management to the point of discrediting*" (Horvat, 1989, 25).

In the context of the "Western" interaction, which in the case of Croatia has a particularly great significance in the process of the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the establishment of nation-states in the 1990s, it is interesting to note the perception of the situation in Yugoslavia in the press of political emigration.[17] The most prominent Croatian magazine for culture *Hrvatska revija* – along with a wealth of information on the state of Yugoslavia and social turmoil (in this context and self-management) – also provides detailed information on the activities of Croatian and Yugoslav media and public engagement of intelligentsia. It is also noted that there are many proposals for exiting the current crisis in Yugoslavia. Those propositions ranged "*from the idea of strengthening the Federation and its center in Belgrade what would bring the more efficient economic growth to the demands for reforms which would introduce free market with pluralistic differences in individual republics*" (Hrvatska revija, 1988).

As one of the later proposals, Review writes on the program of "*two prominent Croatian economists, Slavko Goldstein, and Marijan Korošić*" (Danas, 1. 12. 1987). "*This is a public outcry of two intellectuals in the Zagreb weekly newspaper Danas, which attracted great public attention and challenged a number of critical reviews of prominent socio-political workers*". As *Hrvatska revija* transmitted, Goldstein and Korošić advocate

17 Information in the emigrant *Hrvatska revija* (Croatian Review) – used in this paper as a source can be seen as a kind of chronicle of economic and social crisis based on Yugoslav and foreign media monitoring. Of course, the *Hrvatska revija* author's positions are determined by national, anti-Yugoslav and anti-communist premises. Nevertheless, by comparing the writings in the *Hrvatska revija* and the original Yugoslav media contributions, it can be noticed that the information are largely faithfully transmitted, albeit with ratings and comments corresponding to the political and ideological position of individuals and organizations to which they belonged.

an open economy with great opportunities for private individuals, various types of property, the release of exports and imports of all bonds, the suspension of work on the change of the Constitution, the establishment of a temporary government with special powers for a transitional period, the development of Republican pluralism in the economy and politics, the abolition of the Fund for Underdevelopment and the establishment of the Bank for Development, the departure from the poor Third World and the approaching of the European Community and abandoning the Alliance of Communists from the role of the 'ruling party' to become the leader in the development of multi-program / pluralist / socialist democracy (Danas, 1. 12. 1987).

When it comes to self-management, Korošić and Goldstein did not propose an explicit rejection of self-management and social ownership but indicated the possibility of affirming parallel private and entrepreneurial ownership in Yugoslavia.

Such suggestions evoked "*greatly approving and even more rejection, especially from ideologized party specialists*". Predrag Tošič named the concept of Goldstein--Korošić's "*unconstitutional*" and "*the escapade*". (Vjesnik, 20. 12. 1987, in: Hrvatska revija, March 1988, 84). Zdravko Tomac accused them of "suspending the constitutional system in an unconstitutional way" (Danas, 8. 12. 1987, in: Hrvatska revija, March 1988, 84). Dragutin Kosovac, from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Stipe Šuvar from Croatia, "*attacked the ideas of two Zagreb economists as a return to capitalism*", not mentioning their names. Foreign Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Nijaz Dizdarević, characterized the possible linking of Yugoslavia with the European Community as the way to the loss of independence and sovereignty (Danas, 15. 12. 1987, in: Hrvatska revija, March 1988, 84). Approving voices came in private and public discussions, and in readers' letters in some newspapers. Korošić's proposal "*that the SFRY Assembly immediately abolish the Law on Associated Work (not social ownership and self-management as such) was greeted at the traditional gathering of Yugoslav economist in Opatija*" (Vjesnik, 6. 12. 1987, in: Hrvatska revija, March 1988, 84). Following the line of Korošić's criticism, one of the participants, Mladen Kovačević, referred to the state administration: "*SIV is constantly claiming that we need more markets and less administration. On the other hand, the same institution is reinforcing the administration*" (Vjesnik, 6. 12. 1987, in: Hrvatska revija, March 1988, 84).

Despite the resistance of conservatives who had no ideas about how to approach the problems, the proposals of the experts gained more attention. For his analysis and proposals of social changes, Marijan Korošić was awarded the Nin Prize in 1988 for his book *Yugoslavia in Crisis* (Korošić, 1989). Analyzing the crisis that upsets the Yugoslav economy, Korošić provided "*a comprehensive analysis and synthesis of trends and situations in the Yugoslav society of the eighties*"; the key thesis was to reject the supremacy of the politics over the economy, to seek solutions in "radical changes" – "complete market solution" and "open economy strategy" (Korošić, 1989, 337). For Korošić, "*the independence of economic subjects derives as a necessary consequence of social ownership and self-management*"; moreover, "*economic freedom is a guarantee that solutions to self-management organizations are made on the basis of rational cost and*

revenue calculation, i.e. on a market basis." In his analysis, Korošić also expressed one "Friedmanian" idea (related to bonds between individual liberties and open market) according to which "*the development of associated labor organization must be parallel to the development of workers as independent creative creatures*" (Korošić, 1989, 215–216).[18] In analyzing the preconditions of the survival of the Yugoslav social system (and the state), Korošić conveys the relevant global anticipations of John Naisbitt about the importance of economic and social forecasting – an attempt to observe "*what is already happening*" (Naisbitt, 1982, 346–347): "*The key is in understanding the present. The present determines the future. That thought could be for us too decisive*"[19] (Korošić, 1989, 346–347). Despite the apparent influence of current trends – the West defeated the East – Korošić kept the idea of sustainable self-management adapted to the needs of radical social and political reforms.

All of these discussions clearly indicated that the very foundations of the existing model of self-managing were shaken. Regardless of the different views on the sustainability of self-management, it was quite clear that getting out of the crisis cannot come without radical social and political changes. As noted, initial changes have taken place following the reform efforts of the last Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Marković. Marković managed to cope with the inflation and began to implement the preconditions for introducing market relations, which implied the redefinition of social property. Of course, that had direct repercussions on self-management. The chief architect of the law which de facto abolished social ownership in 1989 was a professor from the Zagreb Law School and academician Jakša Barbić. Barbić pointed out the necessity of introducing changes, arguing that the concept of social ownership has become unsustainable:

> *We had social ownership, in which nobody knew who the owner was. According to the definition in the Constitution, a property of social ownership belonged to anybody and to nobody. This was a legal absurd that cannot be understood, something that is legally unsustainable. By the Constitution, the workers realized the right to work with social resources, the right to dispose of these resources and on that basis; they were self-managing where they worked. The whole system was based on this concept, everything was carried out from it.*

Barbić also pointed out that a "*state always could invade to protect social ownership through politics because the Party had decided to appoint directors (managing body) or through a social ombudsman who could intervene if there was a violation of social property and self-management*" (Radoš, 2013).

18 Of course, Friedman had different views on the relationship between liberty and the economy, which will be presented in the final part of this paper.

19 Korošić's use of Naisbitt's analysis referred to the necessity of fundamental changes at the time. which, according to the movements of the (modern) era, appear to be the metamorphoses of "*industrial to the information world*".

Gradual suspension of self-management opened a space to a various interpretation of the concept of privatization of the social property. In that context, an interesting view on Yugoslav self-management gave one of the most prominent promoters of liberal capitalism, Milton Friedman. Friedman was known as the father of the so-called the Chicago Monetary School. He was considered a political conservative and radical advocate of neoliberal economic doctrine. He strongly supported an open market as the basis of individual freedoms and considered "socialist democracy" utopia: "*No socialist society can be free in the sense of individual freedoms*" (Friedman, 1992, 19). Although he criticized the efficiency of socialist economics, he believed that – thanks to self-management – Yugoslavia had the best prospects for a successful transition after the fall of the Berlin Wall. In the period of worst crisis in Yugoslavia and searching for its solution he gave four interviews to Drago Baum which were published and commented in *Privredni vjesnik* in the period 1989 till 1991 (Privredni vjesnik, 3. 2. 1989; 13. 2. 1989; 15. 1. 1990; 11. 6. 1990; 1. 8. 1990; 1. 10. 1990). It should be stressed that Friedman new Yugoslavia very well. As mentioned previously he had visited Yugoslavia for a couple of times (in 1962, 1973 and 1979, only a year before Tito's death). He also had an excellent insight in the global economy since he had been working on comparative studies of USSR, Yugoslavia, Israel, Japan etc., especially monetary policy studies and he was considered one of the worldwide inflation experts.

On the eve of the new years of 1990 and 1991, the most exposed topic was privatization. Friedman did not go into detail how to conduct this sensitive operation, but he predicted with incredible precision what would happen if the privatization and the social transition go a wrong way. The most important thing is that Friedman repeatedly expressed the view that system of self-management was a comparative advantage of Yugoslavia in social transformation and privatization simply because it was connected with the concept of social and not the state property as in other socialist countries. He said: "*Today's system of self-management rights, disregarded its limitations, has created better conditions than in another socialist country. Your workers already have certain rights over the company, some kind – as he put it – of truncated property.*" In his opinion

> *It just needs to be transformed into a right, transferable property. Every worker now entitled to a fair share of income would receive the same proportional share in the stock.* […] *This would, however, fulfill the key condition, that is, the conversion of the right over the means of production to private property. I think this is the simplest way for Yugoslavia, as this conversion would have to be done for every company, especially, for example, for every republic, for the whole country, as we have said when considering the situation in other eastern European countries. You simply have to acknowledge the current rights of workers as private property with all attributes, including the right to transfer. If this change would be done clear and swift it will not cause any disruption* (Gavrović, 2016, 188).

When asked what he thinks about social property going back to the state, to be privatized later, Friedman replied

> *It's very dangerous and it needs to be avoided.* [...] *It must not go backward, but in advance, both quickly and radically. To anyone who asked me, I answered that my advice is only three words: privatize, privatize, privatize! It is important that you privatize as soon as possible and as quickly as possible, and less important how you will do it. If you spend to much time, you will be confronted with people who have acquired rights and positions and who will come to power, and you will hang in a situation like in Latin America. I do not believe that communism will return, but there is a great danger of Latin American degeneration, with all the known consequences* (Gavrović, 2016, 191).

The same opinion was shared by other American Nobel prize winners, as shown at the privatization conference, which was held at the Hoover Institute at Stanford University in June 1991. A representative of Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Marković's at that gathering, dr. Dragomir Vojnić witness on the occasion:

> *The first and most important thing to have been advised to us is that we do not convert social ownership (related to self-management) into the state because it is a step back and not forward. And this was exactly what became the basic stone of privatization in Croatia. Americans assured us that we already have a sort of capitalism but without capitalists. In Yugoslavia, workers and other employees were at the same time producers and managers and capitalists. They are, in fact, some quasi-owners* (Gavrović, 2016, 191).

In Croatia, many economists (in vain) represented the same concept as Friedman and other American experts. They argued that property should be shared, and their only dilemma was if it should be shared only to employees in companies or to all citizens (who were legally the owners of all public property). Friedman advocated both solutions. In his words, in Yugoslavia "*social ownership was an advantage given to workers, while in other eastern countries, where there was no self-management, he advocates share among all of the citizens*" (Gavrović, 2016, 192).

In the critique of privatization, one of the loudest intellectual in Croatia was Branko Horvat, otherwise "the complete Friedman's antipode". Contrary to Friedman who advocated the idea that without private ownership there is no market Horvat radical supporter of self-management and social ownership. Horvat didn't see a private property as an essential issue but merely the market orientation. "*Who, for example, is the owner of large American companies with millions of shareholders,*" he asked, proving that even in the most capitalist of all capitalist countries, private property is already part of the past. According to him, in market conditions, self-management of social property should not be less efficient than private ownership. When speaking on sustainable self-management Horvat called upon "*associations of self-employed companies in various countries, particularly legislation in some US states, and dozens of ESOP (Employee Stock Ownership Plan) companies in the United States, to an extremely interesting and highly efficient integrated system of seventy cooperatives 'Mondragon' in Spain, numerous individual attempts worldwide, etc.*" (Horvat, 1990, 40).

Even after the demise of Yugoslav socialism, Horvat remained faithful to the idea of self-management. He consistently sought to annul the privatization and return the property to the workers:

If the self-management company works well, let it go. Why do the government and politicians think they could overtake the property they did not create? It is important that there is competition and that the economy is separate from politics. Then democracy is functioning. We have been fighting etatism and state ownership for 45 years, and now we have the most recent etatism. Everything has been done so the people in the government seize as much social property as possible (Horvat, 1990, 40).

CONCLUSION

The system of Yugoslav workers self-management was a political, social and economic experiment which developed in between the capitalist West and the Communist East. After the Tito and Stalin split in 1948, Yugoslavia opened up to the West and its influences. One of the important consequences of this turning point was the gradual alleviation of rigid Party's control; exposed to the Western influences and supported by the idea of self-management intelligentsia will develop a certain critical discourse unimaginable in real communist states. The self-management became the origination of development of Yugoslav society and at the same time a subject of a study and social criticism. The latter led to the constant friction of the ideology and critical thought, party bureaucracy and liberally oriented intelligentsia. Despite the initial idea of transferring authority to the working class, the central role was played by the "social avant-garde" – the Communist Party, and Josip Broz Tito as supreme arbitrator and authority. Tito epitomized Yugoslavia and unified all the most important political, state and military functions.

Within these ambivalent frameworks, a distinctive idea of socialist democracy based on self-management (future non-party system) emerged and evolves with ups and downs over four decades. Self-management was associated with the concept of social ownership, as opposed to state ownership in the East and the private in the West. From the vision of Edvard Kardelj's "*autonomous socialist communities – whether a village--based cooperative, a commune, or an organization of associated labor (in the same time a workplace and unit of account)*" – self-management arose to an extremely complex political and social system. In political sense, self-management institutions "*were linked by representation in assemblies and the party hierarchy*" and economically they presented associations of autonomous producers "*who were linked partly through the hierarchy of the banking system and monetary control, and partly through cooperative contracts*" (Woodward, 1995, 172). From its beginning, all those forms and aspects of self-management showed complex structural problems; partly due to the experimental nature of self-management and predominantly because of constant ideological pressure of Communist party apparatus and state bureaucracy.

In its liberal phase in the 1960s, self-management became a powerful generator of promoting freedom of expression in all areas of intellectual activity. Due to the openness of Tito's Yugoslavia, many intellectuals from Yugoslavia and – predominantly – Western countries had the opportunity to cooperate, exchange opinion and analyze the phenomenon of self-management. This resulted in the development of various forms of social criticism which followed the development of the Yugoslav self-government society despite the party's watchful eye and the occasional punishment of the misfit individuals and groups. After the defeat of Communists who advocated liberal and national reforms (1971–1972), the seventies brought the stagnation, and then the gradual collapse of the self-managing system. Paradoxically, the same period was marked by the key legislative reforms of the Yugoslav self-government society (the 1974 Constitution and the 1976 Associated Law Act), initiated and implemented by the party's top. Instead of development and consolidation of self-management, a giant bureaucratic apparatus had made it a dysfunctional and impracticable project. Actually, endless reforms of the system balanced in between politics and economy while the erosion of economic and social conditions was becoming a constant trend.

The death of Josip Broz Tito in 1980 – the main integrative bond of Yugoslav society, coincided with the sharpening of political and economic antagonisms that ultimately proved to be fatal for the survival of the state itself. In the eighties the self-management system broke down due to the inefficiency of economy and incapacity of the political elite to conduct necessary reforms; the supposed leading role of the working people turned out to be an endless transfer process which actually turned the idea of "permanent revolution" into the reality of the "permanent crisis". In the society in which every member had the right to work, unemployment and mass migration became the reality of everyday life and a clear indicator of a gap between the ideological projections and common praxis of self-management. Finally, the severe crisis steered social unrest and national confrontations which led to a dissolution of the state itself. Nevertheless, the last decade of Socialist Yugoslavia was also a very fruitful period of engagement of intellectuals who wanted to contribute to the resolution of the Yugoslav crisis. In this context, many new interactions of Western influences emerged which in the intellectual plan questioned the sustainability of Yugoslav economy and self-management system: a capital work on the political economy of socialism by the economist and promoter of self-management Branko Horvat was nominated by the most respected American economists for the Nobel Prize; the consideration of Croatian intellectuals Marijan Korošić and Slavko Goldstein about introducing an open market and promoting political pluralism attracted attention not only to the Yugoslav public but also to foreign circles and even political emigration; the last Yugoslav Prime minister Ante Marković was seeking exit from the crisis in co-operation with leading American economists; in the critical period of the Yugoslav society in the late eighties, the debate on the model of economic and social transition was joined by the famous economist Milton Friedman.

Although all of these vivacious intellectual activities focused on self-management will soon be suppressed by the rise of nationalism and the dramatic events culminating in the collapse of the Yugoslav state, they testify to the peculiarities of the Yugoslav

social experiment: due to the ambivalence of the "liberal-dogmatic" nature of Titoism, the problems of the development of Yugoslav self-government have been followed by a critical thought. In today's conditions of doctrinal vacuum and search for sustainable political, economic and social modalities of a globalized society, Yugoslav experience is not without significance. In a sense, the hybrid Yugoslav economic model represented the syncretic historical predecessor of a contemporary Chinese doctrine in which the market and entrepreneurship emerge as regulators of economic relations, alongside the central political function of the communist party and the state (though, unlike modern Chinese liberal economy, the Yugoslav model of the market was based on the sublime concept of a negotiated economy, associated labor, and social ownership). Nevertheless, the legacy of the Yugoslav socialist society based on self-management can be considered as an interesting intellectual heritage – a specific form of the competent culture of dissent within the communist society. In that context, the scientific contributions in the fields of sociology, economy, politology, and philosophy even nowadays present not only historical sources for studying Yugoslav history, but also a valuable heritage relevant for considerations of future forms of economy and social stratification.

SOCIALISTIČNO SAMOUPRAVLJANJE MED POLITIKO IN EKONOMIJO

Albert BING
Hrvatski insitut za povijest, Opatička 10, 10000 Zagreb, Hrvaška
e-mail: albert1.bing@gmail.com

POVZETEK

Članek se osredotoča na jugoslovanske politične, ekonomske in socialne razmere ter diskusije o sistemu samoupravljanja od petdesetih let dalje, s poudarkom na obdobju po smrti Josipa Broza Tita leta 1980. Uvodni del članka vključuje pregled relevantnih vidikov samoupravljanja do leta 1980, ko je poslabšanje političnega in gospodarskega položaja na Hrvaškem in v celotni Jugoslaviji sprožilo odzive uglednih intelektualcev, ki so se lotili analize perspektiv jugoslovanskega ekonomskega modela. Ob kratki genezi samoupravljanja je predstavljena tudi njegova percepcija tako v Jugoslaviji kot na Zahodu in z zgodovinske perspektive podana ocena o dediščini tega sistema. Pri tem je posebna pozornost namenjena analizi zahodnih vplivov kot posledici odprtosti Jugoslavije po sporu med Titom in Stalinom. Članek v svojem jedru prikazuje analitične prispevke vodilnih mednarodnih in hrvaških strokovnjakov kot so bili Milton Friedman, Branko Horvat, Marijan Korošić, Slavko Goldstein in drugi, ki so se ukvarjali s perspektivami jugoslovanskega modela tako v času njegovega nastajanja kot v zadnjem obdobju obstoja socialistične Jugoslavije.

Ključne besede: samoupravljanje, socialistična Jugoslavija, Josip Broz Tito, Edvard Kardelj, Milton Friedman, Branko Horvat

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RETROSPECTIVE LESSONS AND GENERATIONAL GAPS: THE IMPACT OF YUGOSLAV COMMUNIST ÉMIGRÉS IN INTERWAR CZECHOSLOVAKIA ON THE POSTWAR YUGOSLAV STATE

Stefan GUŽVICA
University of Regensburg, The Graduate School for East and Southeast European Studies,
Landshuter Straße 4, 93047 Regensburg, Germany
e-mail: guzvica.stefan@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This article examines the activity of Yugoslav communist émigrés in Czechoslovakia between 1928 and 1938. Prague was a major center of communist activity and most prominent members of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia had spent a significant amount of time there in the interwar period. By looking at their political actions at the time and their subsequent reflections on it, the author argues that a qualitative difference exists between the subsequent political development of those who became communists during the so-called "Third Period" of the Comintern (1928–1934), and those who were radicalized during the Popular Front era (1934–1939). The Generation of the Third Period was more conservative and more loyal to Stalinism, whereas the Generation of the Popular Front led the reform process in socialist Yugoslavia after the war.

Keywords: Communist Party of Yugoslavia, League of Communists of Yugoslavia, student movement, Popular Front, Third Period, communism, Czechoslovakia, The Czechoslovak First Republic

LEZIONI RETROSPETTIVE E DIVARI GENERAZIONALI: I COMUNISTI JUGOSLAVI EMIGRATI IN CECOSLOVACCHIA TRA LE DUE GUERRE MONDIALI E IL LORO IMPATTO SULLA JUGOSLAVIA DEL DOPOGUERRA

SINTESI

Il contributo presenta l'attività dei comunisti emigrati jugoslavi in Cecoslovacchia tra il 1928 e il 1938. Praga era un importante centro di attività comuniste e i maggiori esponenti del Partito Comunista jugoslavo vi trascorsero un considerevole lasso di tempo nel periodo tra le due guerre. Esaminando le loro azioni politiche del tempo e le loro successive riflessioni su di esse, l'autore sostiene che ci sia una differenza qualitativa tra il conseguente sviluppo politico di coloro che aderirono al comunismo durante il cosiddetto "Terzo Periodo" del Comintern (1928–1934) e quello degli emigrati che

furono radicalizzati nel periodo del Fronte Popolare (1934–1939). La Generazione del Terzo Periodo era più conservativa e più fedele allo stalinismo, mentre la Generazione del Fronte Popolare assunse la guida nel processo di riforme nella Jugoslavia socialista dopo la guerra.

Parole chiave: Partito Comunista jugoslavo, Lega dei Comunisti di Jugoslavia, movimento studentesco, Fronte Popolare, Terzo Periodo, comunismo, Cecoslovacchia, Prima Repubblica Cecoslovacca

INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1934, a young Yugoslav medicine student by the name of Gojko Nikoliš visited Prague as part of a two-month student exchange. This event was a tradition in the interwar period, strengthening ties between Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. It was meant both to connect the youth of the two states and to educate them in the spirit of Slavic unity and loyalty to their countries. What neither of the states was counting on was that the youth would use such exchanges to connect with politically subversive individuals and organizations. Yet, this was precisely what Nikoliš did. At his own request, an acquaintance connected him with the Yugoslav Marxist students in Prague.

Almost half a century later, his recollections of the trip were extremely atypical for a young communist militant who had just experienced a bourgeois democracy for the first time:

> *Seeing people argue openly and in broad daylight, in apartments or cafes on Wenceslas Square, in favor of those political views which could get one imprisoned in Yugoslavia was an exciting novelty for me. I had the impression that our people in Prague have much to gain from the time spent there. This city of such a high culture and democratic traditions which we lacked in Yugoslavia (yet nonetheless derided as 'bourgeois') had left a clear mark in the psyche of our Party comrades* (Nikoliš, 1981, 89–90).

Nikoliš is reminiscing half a century later, long after the split with Stalin and the ideological opening of Yugoslav society. However, this memoir becomes even more interesting when contrasted with contemporary memories of another Prague-based Yugoslav communist, Vlajko Begović, who had left Czechoslovakia in 1933 due to police persecution. Begović, who had been a member of the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia (Savez komunističke omladine Jugoslavije – SKOJ) since 1927, was not enchanted by bourgeois democracy, neither in the 1930s nor later on in life. He spoke of "*elastic*



Fig. 1: Yugoslav communists from Prague in Spain in 1937. Standing: Mirko Kovačević, Ratko Pavlović Ćićko, Lazar Udovički, Mirko Knežević, Jože Breskvar i Ilija Engel. Sitting: Slavko Čolić, Veljko Vlahović, Lazar Latinović i Branko Krsmanović (Wikimedia Commons).

politics" and "*utilizing Czechoslovak bourgeois democracy*" (Begović, 1976, 584). There is no elaborate monologue about the political freedoms, pluralism, and similar things perceived by Nikoliš as the advantages of Czechoslovak democracy – things that do not seem to have interested Begović much even later on in his career as a politician and intellectual in socialist Yugoslavia.

Begović formally became a communist in 1927 and Nikoliš in 1934. In spite of a difference of only seven years, the two were worlds apart. These seven years were an interregnum in a world which, in the words of Eric Hobsbawm,

> *was simply not expected to last, in something that could not really even be described as a world, but merely as a provisional way-station between a dead past and a future not yet born, unless perhaps in the depth of revolutionary Russia* (Hobsbawm, 2003, 47).

In 1927, Weimar Germany was trembling before the danger of communist takeover, Yugoslavia was torn by inter-ethnic conflict embodied in corrupt nationalist parties, and the Soviet Union was in the final stages of Trotsky's defeat. Seven years later, the world of 1927 seemed as peaceful as *La Belle* Époque: Weimar was no more, the communists

were crushed, and the Nazis were in power; Yugoslavia had a royal-military dictatorship which was showing no signs of subsiding; and a world economic crisis had plunged millions into poverty in an already impoverished and brutal world. It was only in the Soviet Union that the situation seemed more stable and more optimistic than before; but the Soviet Union was directly and very seriously threatened by the forces rising out of the ruins of the Old World.

These two worlds, I will argue, left a clear divide between different generations of Yugoslav communists. Using a case study of the Yugoslav communist émigré community in Prague, I will show that the older communists, who joined the party in the 1920s, underwent a different experience of communism than those who joined the movement in the wake of the rise of fascism. While the older were more focused on party discipline and world revolution, the younger were as concerned with saving the world from fascism as they were with establishing socialism. The Generation of the Third Period, as I will call them, was more likely to remain on the side of the Soviet Union in 1948, and even those who sided with Tito did not become reformists within the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (Komunistička partija Jugoslavije – KPJ) starting from the 1950s. The Generation of the Popular Front, on the other hand, was often radicalized upon arrival to Prague, as a consequence of observing the differences between Czechoslovakia and their country of origin. This generation of students underwent its own ideological formation during the Popular Front period, making them more likely to embrace a plurality of opinions on the left, but also leaving them in a contradictory relationship between ideological pluralism and the need to follow a unified party line in the wake of Stalin's show trials and the Comintern's frequent U-turns. Ultimately, I will use this case study to argue that the generational shift in the mid-1930s, along with the experiences of émigré life in Prague and the Spanish Civil War, helped facilitate the Yugoslav transition away from Stalinism in the 1950s.

THE YUGOSLAV COMMUNISTS IN PRAGUE, 1919–1938

Prague was one of the most significant hubs of Central European communism in the interwar period. Initially lagging behind Berlin and Vienna, its significance grew as both of these cities fell to fascism. However, it became important to the Yugoslav communists long before that. After the banning of the KPJ in Yugoslavia in 1920, the communists quickly saw that they could use the comparably more democratic places such as Prague and Vienna to propagate views which were illegal in their country. Moreover, Czechoslovakia was a special case: it was an ally of Yugoslavia and a fellow Slavic nation, which made it easy to obtain visas. As such, it was not only appealing to the communist rank and file, but also to students of working class and peasant backgrounds, as well as economic émigrés, groups which were particularly open to communist agitation.

Many prominent Yugoslav communists were active in Czechoslovakia. In 1920 and 1921, Prague was the home of young communist terrorists Rodoljub Čolaković and Nebojša Marinković (Cvetković, 1980, 167). The two were members of the terrorist organization *Crvena Pravda* which assassinated the Yugoslav Minister of Interior, Milorad

Drašković, in July 1921, as response to banning the KPJ. While Čolaković was sentenced to 12 years in prison, Marinković was cleared of charges and then immigrated to Prague, where he worked on connecting all Yugoslav Marxist émigré organizations to the KPJ (Gavrić, 1971, 350).[1] However, a more serious attempt at expanding the influence among the Yugoslav youth came only several years later. The initiative originated from the communist medical student Dragiša Mišović. He arrived in 1925 from Paris after the government revoked his scholarship because of his decision to join the French Communist Party (Parti communiste français – PCF). Mišović began working through the umbrella student organization, the Yugoslavia Academic Society, and organized a movement against the Yugoslav embassy's repression of radical students.[2] However, a permanent and well-grounded Marxist student organization would not be formed until 1927.

The late 1920s were a turning point in the relations between the KPJ and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa – KSČ). 1928 and 1929 saw the rise of two Yugoslav communists who would dominate party politics in the following decade. They were Milan Gorkić and Vladimir Ćopić. Milan Gorkić's real name was Josef Čižinský, and he was an ethnic Czech from Sarajevo. In 1928, he became the organizational secretary of the Young Communist International. A faithful follower of the Stalin party line and a protégé of Bukharin, this young Czech would rise to the post of the *de facto* leader of the KPJ in 1932. Ćopić was already a well-known communist and a member of parliament in the short period before the outlawing of the KPJ in 1920. However, he had spent several years in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), distant from party affairs, teaching at the The Communist University of the National Minorities of the West (Kommunistichesky Universitet Natsionalnykh Menshinstv Zapada – KUNMZ)[3] and attending the International Lenin School. In 1929, he was assigned to the post of a party instructor in Czechoslovakia. He would remain in that position until 1932, when he would join Gorkić in the temporary leadership of the party. His contacts with the KSČ would continue through his wife, Růžena Fialová.

Moreover, 1929 was the year of a first successful takeover of a legal student organization by young communists. Under the supervision of the party cell led by Marinković, the students were engaged in infiltrating largely apolitical student organizations since at least 1925. Their first target was the Society of Yugoslav Technical School Students (Društvo jugoslovenskih tehničara – DJT). It was targeted due to the class position of the technical school students. The law of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes barred those who completed their secondary education in technical secondary schools from entering university, which essentially excluded people from the lower classes from higher education, forcing them to get scholarships for studying abroad (Cvetković, 1980, 168).

1 He stayed in Prague until 1933, when he immigrated to the Soviet Union, where he would eventually fall victim to the Great Purge. Čolaković would go on to become one of Tito's closest associates in Paris in 1937 and 1938, before eventually being dismissed by Comintern intervention due to connections with the purged former KPJ general secretary Milan Gorkić.

2 AJ, 66, 441, 702, Jugoslavensko akademsko društvo "Jugoslavija" g. Svetozaru Pribićeviću, Ministru prosvete Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, March 30, 1925.

3 KUNMZ was a training school for communist cadres of Central Europe, Scandinavia, and the Balkans.

However, the more moderate students managed to prevent their takeover, after which the communists turned to the Croatian nationalist student society "Matija Gubec". The ranks of the Croatian nationalist organization swelled with the increasingly successful communist agitators. Their strategy was twofold: raise class consciousness through personal work with students and legalize aspects of Party work through infiltrated student societies. By the spring of 1929, they completely took over the organization,[4] and the Croatian nationalists either accepted their leadership or became passive and abandoned their political work. Over the next several years, the "Matija Gubec" Society would be the hub of Yugoslav communist activity in Prague, arranging lectures, events, and political actions aimed at improving the life of students.[5] By 1936, the young communists would also succeed in taking over the DJT and several other "national" Yugoslav societies, eventually even winning a majority in the Jugoslavija Academic Society, the umbrella organization of Yugoslav students in Prague (Udovički, 1997, 79). Their success was greatly facilitated by the KPJ's new Popular Front line, which gave the communists a reputation of principled antifascists, and even defenders of the Czechoslovak and Yugoslav states.

With the rise of fascism, the significance of Prague for both the KPJ and the international communist movement grew significantly. The Yugoslav party technical apparatus, which was in charge of producing falsified documents and printing *Proleter*, moved to Prague in 1934, after Vienna became too unsafe for it to continue operating from there (Očak, 1988, 183). Additionally, the Czechoslovak capital was, at the time, also the home of Svetozar Pribićević, the head of Independent Democrats and one of the most famous Yugoslav political exiles. Formerly a royalist Minister of Interior, Pribićević completely broke with the court and, being a pragmatist, began allying with republicans and federalists, for which he was forced to emigrate in 1931. The communists were close to him throughout this period, and in January 1936, Ćopić met with him to negotiate "a worker-peasant coalition" along Popular Front lines (Očak, 1980, 267). The KPJ and the Independent Democrats reached a deal on a peasant-worker antifascist coalition, led by Pribićević, which would be oriented towards preserving the Yugoslav-Czechoslovak-French alliance and extending it to include the Soviet Union (Očak, 1980, 268; Očak, 1988, 202–203). The cooperation was cut short by Pribićević's sudden death in September 1936, after which the Independent Democrats' political influence began to decline. Gorkić, who also negotiated with Pribićević, would be arrested in Moscow less than a year after Pribićević's death. His heir, Josip Broz Tito, would present a different vision of the Popular Front, one in which the communists do not follow the leadership of a bourgeois democratic party, but instead play a leading role, with other political parties in a subordinate position.[6]

Prague appears to have been an important backdrop to Gorkić's political downfall.

4 AHMP, SK, X/364, Stanko Aranjoš, Policejní ředitelství (společenské oddělení), April 7, 1929.
5 For a detailed account of Yugoslav student organizations in Prague in this period, see Gužvica, 2017a and Gužvica, 2017b.
6 For a discussion of the difference between Tito's and Gorkić's conceptions of the Popular Front, see Swain, 1989.

This was because the city became, after Paris, the second most important point for sending Yugoslav volunteers to Spain. The main organizer and the link between the KPJ and the volunteers was Velimir Dreksler (Marko Perić), a Croatian Jew who was sent by the party to Prague in order to work in the party's technical apparatus (Perić, 1963, 43). As the general secretary, Gorkić frequently visited the city and met with him, as well as other volunteers and organizers. Gorkić also sent Ćopić to Prague to work in the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia again, after the pair had a political fallout in the spring of 1936 (Očak, 1980, 303–304). Ćopić would then go on to Spain and become the commander of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, most likely thanks to his connections with the Czechoslovak comrades. In December 1936, Gorkić met in Prague with Tito, then a newly-appointed member of the Politburo, to discuss the transfer of volunteers to Spain on the ship *La Corse* (Očak, 1988, 226, 257). The ill-fated plan resulted in the arrest of several hundred potential Yugoslav volunteers, as well as Politburo member Adolf Muk, in April 1937. Muk confessed to everything and gave the Yugoslav police detailed information on every single individual member of the Central Committee, most of who had been known to them only under pseudonyms at that point (Očak, 1988, 285–288). This was the final nail in the coffin for Gorkić, who came under investigation and got arrested by the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (Narodnyy Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del – NKVD) after being recalled to Moscow four months later.

The decline in importance of Prague coincided with the downfall of Gorkić. The causal relationship was only partial, however. The deteriorating political situation in Czechoslovakia in 1938 played a significant role. The city already became secondary to Paris in late 1936, when the Central Committee was moved to France and the party press to Brussels (Očak, 1980, 222). Moreover, as Tito was trying to posit himself as the next general secretary, he took steps to move the Central Committee back into Yugoslavia for the first time since 1930. This necessitated the abolition of party centers in Vienna and Prague before the central party apparatus was moved from France into Yugoslavia. In September 1937, after having sent the last remaining Yugoslav volunteers to Spain, Dreksler – Perić himself left for Spain (Perić, 1963, 49). Three months later, around Christmas, Tito arrived in Prague and oversaw the closing of the party headquarters (Damjanović, 1981, 314). The KPJ was no longer active in the Czechoslovak capital.

THE THIRD PERIOD AND ITS DEVIATIONS

The KPJ organization in Prague evolved as émigrés came and left, but it also followed the Comintern's frequent U-turns of policy. This enables me to observe both the development of Yugoslav communist political thought and the subsequent impact of the Czechoslovak context. Through an examination of their political *praxis* and memoirs, I intend to identify the two very distinct generations of communist organizers: the Generation of the Third Period and the Generation of the Popular Front. Finally, I will also briefly reflect on the "heretics:" those individuals who, for one reason or another, do not fit within the broader interpretation of their generations, as well as those who radically questioned, or even abandoned, the communist movement.

The Generation of the Third Period was different from the generation of radicals who became communists during the Bolshevik Revolution and its immediate aftermath, although the faith in the new world brought about in October 1917 would be an ideological constant and inspiration for all who became communists in the interwar period. The first generation, at least in the case of Eastern European communist parties, was mostly composed of former social democrats radicalized by the war and the Bolshevik Revolution, and the former ultra-leftists and anarchists who believed Bolshevism to be the first step in bringing the long-awaited revolution to their own countries (Fowkes, 2008, 207). The latter were opposed to reformism and sometimes engaged in terror, and were aptly described by the Yugoslav communist Kamilo Horvatin as "*half national revolutionary and half anarchist in character*" (AJ, 790/13, H/10, 1). By contrast, those who joined the party later in the 1920s became communists when the movement and the first workers' state were in a period of soul-searching after the expected revolutions outside of Russia failed to materialize. International communism thus became divided between the right and the left. This was, broadly speaking, a question of whether revolutionary action abroad and construction of socialism in the USSR should take place gradually or rapidly. In the Yugoslav context, factional struggles led to led to an over-intellectualization of the contemporary political issues at the cost of actual active engagement with the working class.

The Sixth World Congress of the Comintern, which took place in the summer of 1928, was the culmination of efforts to save the movement from such divisions. The constituent parties of the Communist International expelled left and right factionalists and adopted a unified and confrontational ultra-left line predicated on the assumption that revolutionary upheavals in Europe would happen in the near future. Although such a development was certainly pushed from above by the Stalin-Bukharin duumvirate, it also received impetus from below, in particular coming from younger and more radical party members (McDermott & Agnew, 1997, 72). The changes in the Comintern also brought about a dominance of general secretaries in constituent parties, working class leaders who were not notable theoreticians but were unquestionably loyal to Moscow, such as Gottwald, Thorez, Thälmann, or Togliatti.[7] The communists who became active in this period emphasized loyalty and proper adherence to the party line, as well as a rejection of the cooperation with the non-communist left, which would later be denounced as "sectarian."

The Yugoslav communists in Prague broadly followed this development. The two KPJ members who were the most prominent profiteers from the changes that took place in 1928 were simultaneously those whose ties to Czechoslovakia were the closest, namely Gorkić and Ćopić. As both eventually fell victim to Stalin's Great Purge, we cannot know how the experience of Prague would have reflected on them in their subsequent political career. However, their political actions show a loyal adherence to the Comintern line. Gorkić, who, as already mentioned, had been a follower of Bukharin,

7 Such was also the case with the Yugoslav Đuro Đaković, whose term was cut short by his murder at the hands of the Yugoslav police in 1929. For an excellent analysis of these leaders, see: LaPorte & Morgan, 2008.

was in charge of enforcing the "Open Letter" of the Comintern to the members of the KPJ, which politically marginalized the previous leading members of the left and the right (Očak, 1988, 118–123). Interestingly, Ćopić had quite a similar task in Czechoslovakia: he was sent there as a Comintern instructor who oversaw the Stalinization of the KSČ (Očak, 1980, 208–209).

Meanwhile, the communist students in Prague became a textbook example of young communist militancy. They adopted a confrontational attitude towards the Yugoslav regime and focused on working with organizations radically opposed to the Yugoslav regime and the monarchy. The choice of taking over "Matija Gubec," a Croatian nationalist student society, was by no means accidental or opportunist. It was in line with the contemporary view of the KPJ which saw Yugoslavia as an artificial creation of the Versailles Treaty that needs to be abolished. The communists allowed the Croatian nationalists to stay within the ranks of the society, although most of them became passive after the police began investigating the society's political activity (Begović, 1976, 586). At the same time, the communists became involved in the more radical Collective of Croatian Students (Zadruga hrvatskih akademičara – ZHA), who adopted a "national revolutionary platform," meaning a violent overthrow of the Yugoslav state and establishment of an independent Croat state (Bojović, 1964, 40–41).

The subsequent life trajectories of leading students and party members active at this time show the lasting impact of lessons they learned about revolutionary agitation and belonging to the international communist movement, then interpreted as loyalty to the USSR. Given that the communist party cell and student organization had a total of about two dozen people between 1927 and 1933 (Gužvica, 2017a, 73), it is striking that five of them found themselves on the side of the Cominform during the 1948 Tito-Stalin Split. Dragan Miler-Ozren and Franjo Huša both died on Goli Otok in 1951. Adela Bohunicki, the founder of the KPJ party cell in 1927, spent five years in women's prison on the island of Sveti Grgur. Even though she was eventually rehabilitated, she remained an unrepentant, but passive Stalinist until her death in the 1970s. Nikola Petrović was relieved of all his party duties in 1951 and spent the remainder of his life as a historian. Zora Gavrić remained in Prague as a Czechoslovak citizen and was arrested under false charges of Titoism in 1949. Another one of the group, Ljudevit Trilnik, found himself siding with Petko Miletić's ultra-left faction against Tito in the late 1930s, before he was expelled from the KPJ, allegedly for being a police informant. Although not in line with the ideals of party discipline, his actions were certainly compatible with the ideals the Comintern held in 1928 (Damjanović, 1981, 257, 374).

The only prominent communist of the period who successfully navigated through changing party politics was the aforementioned Vlajko Begović. He was a major figure in the postwar Yugoslav socialist state, but was always strongly on the conservative wing of the KPJ after 1948. Another exceptional case was Miron Demić, whose consistent leftism led him away from the mainstream communist movement, as he was, shortly before his death in Spain in 1936, accused of Trotskyism (RGASPI, 495, 277, 1827, 82). The only one of this generation who, by disposition, belonged more to the Popular Front generation, was Ivo Vejvoda, who arrived in Prague in 1930. An architect from a middle-class family,

he became a communist "*not out of hunger, because I was not starving back in Karlovac, but out of my own intellectual and moral revelations and beliefs. For me, Prague played a crucial role in that development*" (Berić, 2013, 49). He went as far as to say that the book *Sotsgorod* by the Soviet architect Nikolay Alexandrovich Milyutin was instrumental in awaking his initial interest in communism (Berić, 2013, 50). The artistic orientation of some of the communists must have played a role both in their radicalization and in ideological openness beyond confines of the Third Period. Many of the communists in Prague were students of art academies, and their main influence was the art of the radical left-wing avant-gardes. While Vejvoda became a diplomat and a "liberal" within the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (Savez komunista Jugoslavije – SKJ), those Prague-based Yugoslav communist artists from the Third Period remained loyal to modernist and avant-garde styles. The most notable examples of that were Zvonimir Kavurić, the founder of the Prague party cell in 1927, and Muhamed Kadić, the founder of the student cell. An exception among the artists was Vojislav Vučković, one of the most prominent composers in Yugoslavia who, after 1938, created works in the socialist realist style.

The most typical expressions of ultra-leftism in the Third Period were direct confrontations with Czechoslovak authorities and the Yugoslav Embassy in Prague, which they considered to be representative of a "fascist" regime (RGASPI, 495, 277, 1827, 10). The Yugoslav communists engaged in joint actions with the Czechoslovaks, criticizing the Czechoslovak liberal elites and President Masaryk for their support of the Yugoslav dictatorship (Bojović, 1964, 44). They also disrupted events organized by the Yugoslav Embassy or pro-regime student,[8] and engaged in vandalism. The incident that attracted the most attention was the tearing of the Yugoslav flag on the student dormitory on the night of November 30, 1931, a day before the Yugoslav Unification Day. The colors blue and white were torn off, leaving only red, in act which was to show both the opposition to the Yugoslav state and a commitment to international socialism. What is interesting about this act of political vandalism is that the communists did not act alone, but with the United Revolutionary Youth (Ujedinjena revolucionarna omladina – URO), the youth wing of Pribićević's Independent Democrats.

Independent Democrats and the URO were essentially left-liberal and republican political forces (Avramović, 1986, 170–171), and collaboration with this group should have been anathema according to Comintern orders. Nevertheless, the two groups worked very closely. The communists helped the URO and Pribićević by teaching them about underground work: they taught the URO rank and file how to establish connections with their supporters in Yugoslavia, how to keep their correspondence secret, and how to send orders and receive reports from the country while avoiding police detection (Bojović, 1964, 42). Admittedly, there are plenty of cases of adaptation during the Third Period, where the communists would work with the rank and file of the non-communist left while taking a hostile stance only to their "opportunistic" reformist leadership. However, in this particular case, they worked with the reformist leadership itself. Pribićević stood in their defence, pleading with his political allies in the Czech National Social Party to help the

8 AJ, 38, 32, 77, Studentske demonstracije u Pragu protiv našeg režima, November 25, 1931.

students. They refused because they considered the tearing of a national flag to be too grave of an offence, and the students were expelled from the country.[9] Such cooperation between a high-ranking reformist bourgeois politician and the communists was unprecedented in the Third Period.

Although the KPJ, under Gorkić's leadership, would become a cautious vanguard of the Popular Front (Banac, 1988, 64), this kind of cooperation seems to have been instrumental, and not an expression of early ideological unorthodoxy. Whenever this generation of communists spoke about the non-communist left, they did not show an interest in a broad left platform or in liberal democratic values. Vejvoda, again, was the only exception, and only much later, at the end of the 1980s, when he spoke of Masaryk in superlatives (Berić, 2013, 49). Other communists acted more in accordance with Begović's claim about "*utilizing Czechoslovak bourgeois democracy*" (Begović, 1976, 584). Bohunicki, for example, praised the possibilities for communist agitation provided by the Czechoslovak democracy, although she first and foremost emphasized the high level of development of the Czechoslovak working class and the role of the KSČ in organizing them (Bohunicka, 1971, 410). Begović's reflections seem more adequate for understanding the position of communists in the 1930s than Vejvoda's, as his political views did not change drastically over the decades. Vejvoda, on the other hand, self-critically admits that "*we were all Stalinists until 1948*" (Berić, 2013, 208). When Begović, engages in self-criticism, he does it in the language of the party line expressed in official histories of the KPJ/SKJ. He criticizes the ultra-leftism in a matter-of-fact way, writing that "*certain attitudes and individual statements were a reflection of sectarian radicalism, but this was not typical of the student movement as a whole*" (Begović, 1976, 584).

THE GENERATIONAL DIMENSION OF THE POPULAR FRONT

The Popular Front brought about a radical shift in policy, and it also profoundly affected the ideological formation of the newly-recruited Yugoslav communists. The emphasis of the movement was no longer on the socialist revolution, but on defense against fascism. Once the revolution came, however, the consequence of such a shift in policy were much more far-reaching. Writing in the American context, James R. Barrett observes that the efforts to reform the CPUSA after 1956 were led primarily by the generation of the Popular Front. For them,

> *Union organizing, military service, and electoral coalitions brought* […] *deep immersion in American political and cultural life, in the process transforming the perspectives of these activists. The mass movements of the 1930s and the wartime alliance had allowed this generation of Communists temporarily to bridge the seemingly insurmountable gap between their political commitments and their lives as American citizens* (Barrett, 2009, 545).

9 AJ, 66, 442, 702, Dragutin Prohaska, Izveštaj u vezi sa demonstracijom protiv jugosl. zastave na jugosl. stud. domu u Pragu u noći 30.XI na 1.XII 1931. January 14, 1932.

I argue that the process which the Yugoslav communist émigrés in Prague went through, with their defense of Czechoslovak democracy and the Yugoslav state, played the same role in setting the stage for the reform of the Yugoslav party and society in the 1950s and 1960s. It should be noted, however, that the Popular Front strategy, in spite of its failures in Spain and France at the time, was reinvented in the 1940s and used for the ultimate goal of establishing socialism (Swain, 1992, 642), with the KPJ at the vanguard of this more revolutionary interpretation of the Popular Front.

The replacement of the old ultra-leftists with the popular frontists was a seamless process. The Generation of the Third Period was scattered around Europe, as confrontational policies they adopted made it easier for the Czechoslovak government to find an excuse to deport them (the most notable examples were Demić, Miler-Ozren, and Begović). Although the communists tacitly abandoned confrontation by 1933 because it was counter-productive, the Generation of the Popular Front that came into being would rally to the defense of the Czechoslovak Republic that persecuted the previous generation of their comrades. Before that, however, the communists' popularity began to grow as a mixture of successful policy and failures of the Yugoslav regime. After a new dormitory exclusively for Yugoslav students was opened in 1933, the KPJ members began a successful struggle for "students' self-management" (Bojović, 1964, 43–44). This meant that the policies of the dormitory would be decided by the students who lived there, rather than the Yugoslav or Czechoslovak authorities. The popularity of this demand eventually led to a split among the monarchist students, with the so-called "Centrists" (centrumaši) beginning to work more closely with the communists (Bojović, 1964, 48).

The new strategy of increasing political openness benefited the recruitment efforts of the KPJ. By 1936, the leader of the centrists, Marko Spahić, had become a member of the KPJ (Udovički, 1991, 226–227). One of the leading supporters of the Agrarian Party in Prague, a student named Branko Krsmanović, also joined the KPJ (Udovički, 1997, 65). He would become one of the most prominent Yugoslav communist military commanders in Spain and Yugoslavia before dying in a battle during World War Two. The efforts at forming a mass communist organization among the émigrés in Prague culminated with the takeover of the Jugoslavija Academic Society in the fall of 1935 (Udovički, 1997, 79).

Nevertheless, the process of abandoning the positions of the Third Period was gradual. Although the KPJ was open to broader collaboration on the left, their rhetoric was still explicitly anti-Yugoslav until the end of 1934. In a flyer published in October that year, they spoke of a "so-called Yugoslavia" and reiterated their demands of a right to self-determination of nations oppressed by the Greater Serbian nationalists. They attacked the Little Entente, an alliance of Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia, as "*an exponent of French imperialism*" (NA, PP II, S 112/2). However, this was the last time the communists expressed such views, as the KPJ stopped explicitly calling for a breakup of Yugoslavia following the Fourth Land Conference in December 1934 (Pešić, 1983, 264–265).

Some consequences of the anti-Yugoslav national policy persisted. The only major Yugoslav student organization in Prague that the KPJ failed to take over was the Collective of Students from Serbia, Montenegro and Bay of Kotor (Zadruga akademičara iz Srbije, Crne Gore i Boke Kotorske – ZAS). This could be either because the organization

was largely inactive between 1927 and 1933 or because the official view of Yugoslavia as a project of the Greater Serbian bourgeoisie alienated the members of the society. However, few sources on the organization have been preserved, and the question remains open. In general, the Popular Front period was marked by an embrace of left-wing nationalism, which was combined with a support for Yugoslavia as a multinational state. The Yugoslav connected ethnic and class oppression, reclaimed nationalism from the right and insisted on the need for both an international and national struggle against fascism, reclaiming nationalism from the right (Hobsbawm, 1992, 146–147). Udovički was later quite explicit about these motives:

> *One was the more encompassing, internationalist motive, because we understood that we as a nation cannot fight for democracy and freedom on our own, and the other was that the war in Spain was preparing us for a struggle in our own country and the establishment of a more just social order* (Udovički, 1991, 130).

It is, of course, noteworthy that the struggle in "our own country" was guided by a desire to establish a socialist order. The country was only worth fighting for the promise of revolution was fulfilled. Even more illustrative was the 1937 speech of Veljko Vlahović, a Montenegrin, about his fallen comrade Matija Šiprak, a member of the Croatian Peasant Party. Vlahović contrasted their struggle of a united internationalist left with the divisive ideology of fascism, saying that Montenegrin and Croat antifascists are closer together than a Croat fascist and a Croat antifascist who found themselves on different sides of the frontline in Spain (Pavlaković, 2011, 500). Both Vlahović and Udovički would find themselves on the reformist side of the KPJ/SKJ after the 1948 Split, with Vlahović serving as one of the party's chief ideologues. An example of left-wing nationalism without the internationalist aspect, not foreign to the Popular Front, could be Ivan Rukavina, a Prague-based communist who also fought in Spain, and who eventually participated in the Croatian Spring of 1971, for which he was condemned as a nationalist and forcibly retired.

The appeal of the Popular Front, however, was far from being just a matter of left-wing nationalism. The participation in mass movements led by the KPJ was crucial. In Prague, this was accomplished through student organizations through which communists promised benefits such as free lunches and higher scholarships for lower class students, and not only a militant struggle against fascism (AUK, VA, IV/B, 337). Such grassroots initiatives ensured popular appeal, and mass mobilization in turn facilitated a culture of cooperation on a broad left-wing basis, under communist leadership. The prime example of that was the aforementioned collaboration with the Independent Democrats, which was at its peak in 1935 and 1936.

The crucial issue for communists was how to reconcile such ideological openness with faithfulness to the USSR and the Bolshevik ethos of democratic centralism and party discipline. Ivo Vejvoda remembers that his adoration for the "first country of socialism" was so great that he did not believe the socialist realist writer Vítězslav Nezval's impressions about the beggars and prostitutes of Moscow. To him, the idea that there could be such things in the Soviet Union was simply unimaginable (Berić, 2013, 209). However,

the true test of party loyalty and of the boundaries of the Popular Front did not come from the prostitutes of Moscow. It came from the fantastic accusations of treason made against high-ranking Bolsheviks in the Soviet Union, who allegedly attempted to secretly undermine socialism.

In August 1936, the so-called "Trial of the Sixteen" began in Moscow. Grigory Zinoviev and Lev Kamenev, members of the first Bolshevik Politburo and Lenin's close associates, were executed on Stalin's orders following a brief show trial. The sensational news of their guilt spread quickly, and few in the international communist movement dared to question the validity of the claims about a terrorist conspiracy of Zinoviev and Kamenev in collaboration with Trotsky. This was as true of the Generation of the Popular Front as it was for the more radical communists of the Third Period. However, an internal party controversy developed in Prague about the validity of Stalin's accusations. At the center of the dispute was a young communist named Ratko Pavlović Ćićko.

Ćićko, who arrived in Prague in the fall of 1935, was one of the best-educated and most insightful individuals among the young Yugoslav communists in Prague. A Party member since 1933, Ćićko was already well-versed in literature, political economy, philosophy, history and political theory upon his arrival to Prague. According to Udovički's near-hagiographical account, he impressed his comrades with his knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and his skills as a public speaker and writer (Udovički, 1997, 72). Ćićko was the only Yugoslav communist in Prague who seriously questioned the validity of the accusation, raising havoc at the meeting of the KPJ youth cell. Over the following months, he would allegedly go as far as to point to inconsistencies between classical Marxist works and Stalin's interpretation of them, calling for a return to Lenin (Grbović & Korbutovski, 1981, 74). Udovički claimed that he and Krsmanović agreed with Ćićko, and that he thought Veljko Vlahović did too, although Vlahović did not dare to openly admit it (Udovički, 1997, 77). However, this memoir published sixty years after the events should not be considered proof of an existence of a dissenting party cell among the Prague émigrés. Although Udovički certainly remembered his comrade's words about Stalin well later in life, the primary sources do not show that anyone but Ćićko suffered the consequences for this alleged disobedience of the party line.[10] Nevertheless, he never voiced his concerns publicly, respecting the party discipline, and his criticisms always remained an internal party matter.

The members of the other party cell, consisting of older communists, were furious. Bohunicki, a party member since 1925 and the founder of the KPJ cell in Prague in 1927, openly attacked Ćićko, saying that there is no reason to doubt and dispute Stalin. Udovički remembers that Bohunicki, by then a former Cominformist, had made many negative comments when they spoke about Ćićko shortly before her death in the 1970s, almost forty years after the events (Udovički, 1997, 93). Another member of this cell,

10 Pavlović was a subject of official investigations in the International Brigades and in the Yugoslav Partisans, always because of his comments about Stalin and suspicions that he might be a Trotskyist. He was killed in April 1943 fighting against the Bulgarian troops in Southeastern Serbia. Rumors of his alleged assassination by the Yugoslav partisans have circulated since the late 1980s, but no one has been able to offer definite proof of this.

Ilija Engel, later refused to support Ćićko's candidacy for the president of Yugoslavia Academic Society (Udovički, 1997, 84). While Engel only formally joined the party in Prague in 1934, he was active in the revolutionary movement much earlier, and was first arrested in 1930, at the age of 18 (ISI, 1975, Engel). Therefore, his views are also far more consistent with the Generation of the Third Period that saw his ideological formation as a communist. While Ćićko's cell consisted of students who had only recently joined the movement, the other cell, which was considered superior, consisted of Third Period communists who were both less open to broad left fronts and to dissenting views within the movement. This cell was most likely the place where suspicions of Ćićko's Trotskyism first surfaced.

Ćićko himself was the longest-standing party member among the younger communists, having joined the party in 1933, at a time when its sectarian radicalism was still dominant. Therefore, he could also be seen as somewhat of an anomaly within the generational model. Nevertheless, much like Vejvoda in the Generation of the Third Period, he is the exception that confirms the rule. He was seen by his peers as an eccentric and free-thinking individual who did not really fit well within the Stalinist party culture (Nikoliš, 1981, 253). Equally interesting is the story of Marko Spahić, a heretic of a different kind. Spahić, the former leader of the student "centrists," who deliberated on joining the KPJ for almost three years between 1933 and 1936, eventually became the only one of the group who sided with the Cominform Resolution (Banac, 1988, 116). Although it took him years to make the leap of faith, he became one of the most loyal communists. A 1938 article on the wounded Yugoslavs in Spain mentions Spahić calling Stalin's name in delirium (Kapor, 1969, 38). He is, however, the only member of the Popular Front Generation who parted with the KPJ as a consequence of the Tito-Stalin Split.

RETROSPECTIVE LESSONS: REFORMERS VERSUS CONSERVATIVES

Over forty Yugoslavs left Czechoslovakia for Spain in late 1936 and during 1937. About half of them died in the Spanish Civil War and World War Two; one, Vladimir Ćopić, was executed in the Soviet Union upon his return from Spain. In the student group which left Prague in January 1937, seven out of twenty would receive the title of the People's Hero of Yugoslavia, which was the highest and most honorable order of the socialist state – if not according to rank, then certainly in terms of public perception.[11] Those Yugoslav émigrés from Prague who survived would become some of the most respected and influential Yugoslav diplomats, legislators and ideologues in the post-WWII period. As already mentioned, Veljko Vlahović became one of the leading reformers of the SKJ. His colleagues and comrades, Ivo Vejvoda, Lazar Latinović,[12]

11 These seven were Branko Krsmanović, Mirko Kovačević, Ratko Pavlović-Ćićko, Ratko Vujović-Čoče, Veljko Vlahović, and Ilija Engel. The full list of twenty volunteers is available in Kovačević, 1971, 253.

12 Interestingly, Latinović was the Yugoslav representative at a pan-European conference in Geneva in 1944, which passed the Manifesto of the European Resistance, one of the early documents that espoused the vision of an anti-fascist, federal Europe (Heyde, 2010, 138). This was a time before the outbreak of the Cold War, when the communists and the non-communists alike harbored a hope of a peaceful and cooperative postwar

and Lazar Udovički became leading Yugoslav diplomats, who steered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a way which they saw as a consistent application of the principles of non-alignment, but which was derided by the more conservative party members as anti-Soviet (Petrović, 2010, 212). Gojko Nikoliš served as a moral conscience of the party and was the first prominent revolutionary to have publically condemned the Goli Otok prison camp (Banac, 1988, 253).

Nikoliš, Latinović, Udovički, and Vejvoda, as well as their colleague, the Prague-educated communist composer Oskar Danon, all remained committed internationalists in the 1990s, and frequently publically spoke out against the war in Yugoslavia. Vejvoda, unlike the others, no longer considered himself a communist, but was nonetheless still a pacifist. Another Prague comrade of theirs, Ivo Rukavina, like Vejvoda, became a social liberal, but did not share the opposition to war: he was a military advisor to the Croatian People's Party (FBIS, 1991, 20), which entered the government of national unity under Franjo Tuđman in 1991. Whether reform communist, liberal, or nationalist, these individuals were products of the Popular Front. Almost without exception, they had found themselves on the reform wing of the KPJ in the 1950s and 1960s, and from then on maintained their belief in the need for a plurality of left-wing views while working within the Yugoslav party.

The period of the Popular Front, with its embrace of broad cooperation on the political left and of antifascist (internationalist) nationalism, played a crucial role in shaping the minds of these young communists. Their life trajectories, when contrasted with those who became politically active during the Third Period, show the significance of the generational dimension for understanding Yugoslav socialism. Few works have dealt with the continuities and discontinuities of the KPJ from the interwar to the post-war period. So far, no one has observed the importance that the experience of antifascist struggle had specifically on the development of the reformist current within the KPJ/SKJ after the Tito-Stalin Split. This article should be read as a mere beginning of such an endeavor. Its limitations are twofold. First, I have not examined more thoroughly the class and ethnic background of these individuals. Second, I have only looked at a particular group of Yugoslav communists, those who spent some of the 1920s and 1930s in Prague. A more complete picture would require a more extensive survey of the Yugoslav party, as well as other reform communist movements whose members were influenced by the Popular Front. Moreover, in spite of both the attempts of Stalinist guardians of party discipline and of my own inclinations to find a working model for interpretation, the Yugoslav communists in Prague were not a monolith.

Finally, although the Popular Front left a clear political mark on them, this only became clear retrospectively, after Yugoslavia made a radical break with the Soviet Union and began the process of internal reform. The learning process did not take place

settlement – in the communist case, naturally, in the spirit of the Popular Front. The Geneva Manifesto was penned by Altiero Spinelli, the anti-Stalinist communist turned European federalist, whose ideas laid the grounds for Eurocommunism. Perhaps not so coincidentally, eurocommunism's most significant theoretical elaboration came from Santiago Carillo, another communist politician forged during the Popular Front.

during the Popular Front. The Stalinist project of combining a broad left-wing alliance with absolute devotion to the Soviet Union largely succeeded. Vejvoda, for example, claimed he did not really begin to value the experience of interwar Czechoslovak democracy until he contrasted it to the Prague, he encountered in the 1950s, as a Yugoslav ambassador to Czechoslovakia (Berić, 2013, 139). Many of the memoirs follow this kind of self-reflection, with Vejvoda, Udovički and Nikoliš all frequently contrasting their views from the period with the opinions developed after 1948, and which they uniformly considered to be more critical and less dogmatic. Although the Comintern clearly planted the seeds for a radical rethinking of Marxism-Leninism in the very idea of the Popular Front, this did not become apparent until later. Yugoslav, as well as other reform communists, learned the lessons of 1935 retrospectively.

RETROSPEKTIVNI NAUKI IN GENERACIJSKI PREPADI: JUGOSLOVANSKA KOMUNISTIČNA EMIGRACIJA NA ČEŠKOSLOVAŠKEM MED OBEMA VOJNAMA IN NJEN VPLIV NA POVOJNO JUGOSLAVIJO

Stefan GUŽVICA

Universität Regensburg, Die Graduiertenschule für Ost- und Südosteuropastudien,

Landshuter Straße 4, 93047 Regensburg, Nemčija

e-mail: guzvica.stefan@gmail.com

POVZETEK

Praga je bila v obdobju med obema vojnama eden izmed glavnih centrov jugoslovanske komunistične politične emigracije, ki je tam izkoriščala češkoslovaško demokratično ureditev za širjenje svojih, v domovini prepovedanih stališč. Glede na to, da se je v nekem trenutku v Pragi znašel celoten politbiro Komunistične partije Jugoslavije, ne preseneča dejstvo, da so številni izmed teh komunističnih emigrantov kasneje zasedli ključne položaje v povojni Jugoslaviji. Med njimi se je znašlo tudi več kot trideset kasnejših španskih borcev in sedem partizanskih narodnih herojev. Iz njihovih vrst so izšli najbolj spoštovani in vplivni jugoslovanski diplomati, pravniki, ideologi in kulturni delavci povojnega obdobja. Članek analizira njihova spominska gradiva in druge zapise kot študijo primera, kakšen vpliv so imela različna politična obdobja na njihovo poznejšo ideološko formacijo. Avtor prikazuje, da je v obravnavanem času večina jugoslovanskih emigrantov razumela češkoslovaško demokracijo kot sredstvo za doseganje komunistične agende, ob tem pa so sledili idealu Sovjetske zveze. Po sporu med Titom in Stalinom so nekateri izmed njih iz svoje praške izkušnje retrospektivno povlekli politične nauke, zlasti glede obrambe češkoslovaške demokratične ureditve na okopih ljudske fronte. Iz tega lahko sklepamo, da je generacijski preskok iz druge polovice tridesetih let pripomogel k jugoslovanskemu obratu od stalinizma v petdesetih letih.

Ključne besede: Komunistična partija Jugoslavije, Zveza komunistov Jugoslavije, študentsko gibanje, ljudska fronta, tretje obdobje (Kominterna), komunizem, Češkoslovaška, Češkoslovaška prva republika

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IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHENTIC POSITION: THE FIRST PHASE OF POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL COOPERATION BETWEEN YUGOSLAVIA AND THE WEST EUROPEAN LEFT, 1948–1953

Natalija DIMIĆ
Institute for Recent History of Serbia, Trg Nikole Pašića 11, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia
e-mail: natalija.dimic@inis.bg.ac.rs

ABSTRACT

The Cominform resolution of 1948 created an unexpected situation for the Yugoslav communist leadership. Isolated from the East, the country had to look westwards for the way out of the blockade. The Communist Party of Yugoslavia started searching for new partners and ideological allies amongst West European left. The aim of this article is to outline the transformation of the Yugoslav Communist Party's foreign policy between 1948 and 1953, from alliance with communist parties to supporting "independent socialists" across Europe and to cooperation with social democrats. The article is based mainly on Yugoslav sources and literature.

Keywords: Communist Party of Yugoslavia, independent socialists, social democracy, communism, West European left

ALLA RICERCA DI UNA POSIZIONE AUTENTICA: LA PRIMA FASE DELLA COOPERAZIONE POLITICA E IDEOLOGICA TRA LA JUGOSLAVIA E LA SINISTRA DELL'EUROPA OCCIDENTALE, 1948–1953

SINTESI

La Risoluzione del Cominform nel 1948 creò una situazione inaspettata per la leadership comunista jugoslava. Isolato dall'Est, il paese dovette volgere il suo sguardo all'Ovest per trovare una via d'uscita da una situazione di blocco. Il Partito Comunista jugoslavo si mise a cercare nuovi partner e alleati ideologici tra i partiti di sinistra dell'Europa occidentale. Lo scopo del presente articolo è di delineare la trasformazione della politica estera dei comunisti jugoslavi tra il 1948 e il 1953, dall'alleanza con partiti comunisti al supporto dei "socialisti indipendenti" in tutta Europa, alla cooperazione con i socialdemocratici. L'articolo si basa principalmente sulle fonti e la letteratura jugoslave.

Parole chiave: Partito Comunista jugoslavo, socialisti indipendenti, socialdemocrazia, comunismo, sinistra dell'Europa occidentale

The summer of 1948 heralded what nowadays seems to be one of the most important turning points in the post-war history of Yugoslavia.[1] For the Yugoslav communists the Cominform Resolution represented both an unexpected blow and a major challenge. Until 1948, they were among the firmest and most loyal Stalinists. Not only domestic and foreign policy of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (FPRY), but the whole worldview of the Yugoslav communists was in line with the directives from Moscow. However, as Edvard Kardelj later wrote "*the belief in the protagonists of our own ideology disappeared, practically, overnight*" (Kardelj, 1980, 132). The letters which started arriving from Moscow in the spring of 1948[2] must have reminded the Yugoslav communists of the already well-known methods of liquidation – in the words of Branko Petranović: "*Tito, Kardelj and others who worked in the USSR knew all too well what Stalinist anathemas meant*" (Petranović & Dautović, 1999, 29) – "*There would be no mercy. Heads would roll*" (Dedijer, 1991, 339).

Tito later stated that in June 1948 "*we did not lose faith in socialism; we began to lose faith in Stalin, who had betrayed the cause of socialism*" (Dedijer, 1953, 390). In the spring of 1948, however, it was not only the faith in socialism that concerned the Yugoslav leadership. At the Politburo meeting already in March 1948, when the first misunderstandings in the relations with the USSR arose, Tito stated: "*This is about the independence of our country*." (Petranović, 1995, 238). There were two main motives behind the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) foreign political moves in the years to come – the one of breaking through the isolation, and the other of fighting the Cominform. The conflict with Moscow created temporary disorientation among the Yugoslav leadership and dilemmas about the future steps arose. The following period marked a thorough political and ideological transformation for Yugoslavia. Although state and party organs were institutionally separated, due to the fact that the same people usually had both functions there were little differences between the two lines. So, how did the foreign political strategy of the CPY change during those crucial years?

While opening the meeting of the Commission for International Relations of the Socialist Alliance of the Working People of Yugoslavia (SAWPY) on February 3rd, 1955, Veljko Vlahović outlined several phases that CPY's cooperation with European socialists underwent since the break with the Cominform:

> *There was this initial period with a certain amount of dogmatism* [...]. *In the beginning, we oriented almost exclusively on right-wing groups that followed the Cominform, but later we shifted towards the so-called left within the socialist movements, and at the last stage we focused on mass contacts and penetration among the syndicates.*[3]

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2 The letters in question were sent by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on the March 27th and May 4th, 1948, in which accusations were brought against the CPY leadership.

3 AJ, 142, 36–113, Minutes from the meeting of the Commission for international relations of the SAWPY, February 3rd, 1955.



Fig. 1: Cover of the book entitled The Soviet Union – Legend and Reality by Wolfgang Leonhard published in Yugoslavia in 1952 (in personal possession of the author).

Although Vlahović's short description highlights the key directions of party cooperation after 1948, the reconstruction of contacts with West European left during the late 1940s and early 1950s demonstrates that those directions were not just successive phases but rather simultaneous processes. Both state and party were shunned from the East, and the ties with the West were still undeveloped. Period after the Yugoslav-Soviet split was devoted to finding new partners (Yugoslavs employed all measures available – state, intelligence, party, and personal contacts), searching for ideological inspiration for further moves through readings of Marx, Engels and Lenin, and formulating ideological explanations for their practical steps.

Until the break with the USSR, the Yugoslav communists perceived the social democracy as an integral part of the "bourgeois society". They internalized the decades of rivalry and strife within the international workers' movement and harbored the same attitudes in the first years after the Second World War. The attitude towards the West and social democracy could not have been changed overnight by the Cominform resolution. It, however, initiated a necessity to search for new allies, and to tell the Yugoslav side of the affair as means of shattering the isolation in which the country lay. The first step was refuting of charges and the explanation of the Yugoslav position. Radio broadcasts, brochures, translations of the speeches, and articles of the Yugoslav leadership were employed in this cause. The Yugoslav representatives abroad were tasked with disseminating propaganda material amongst those interested in the "Yugoslav case".[4] However, this propaganda initiative was almost exclusively aimed at the members of the communist parties abroad and those who came from a communist background.

The propaganda activity was followed with establishing contacts with pro-Yugoslav (ex) members of communist parties across Europe, as well as with the individuals, such as journalists, syndical representatives, ex-partisans and others, who were deemed as potentially friendly towards Yugoslavia. This task was especially well carried out by the Yugoslav intelligence service, which even organized the arrival of pro-Yugoslav communists from the East in Yugoslavia. Those among them who were assessed to be "most conscious" and "most capable" were employed directly in the Yugoslav propaganda apparatus. One of them was the East German communist Wolfgang Leonhard,[5] who fled in March 1949 to Yugoslavia, due to his disagreement with the policy of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany. For the next year and a half Leonhard was employed in the Direction for Information[6] and the German section of Radio Belgrade (AJ, 507/IX, 87/III-1-1).

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4 See the lists of brochures translated into foreign languages (English, French, Italian, and German), in: AJ, 142, 44. For an overview of articles published in the Yugoslav press, see: O neistinim i nepravednim optužbama protiv KPJ, izabrani materijali, 1948; O kontrarevolucionarnoj i klevetničkoj kampanji protiv socijalističke Jugoslavije, knj. 1, 1949; O kontrarevolucionarnoj i klevetničkoj kampanji protiv socijalističke Jugoslavije, knj. 2, 1950.

5 Wolfgang Leonhard (1921–2014) was a German communist, a member of the "Ulbricht group", who arrived in 1945 from Moscow to the Soviet occupation zone. He had been in touch with the members of the Yugoslav Military Mission in Berlin since 1946. Leonhard visited Yugoslavia for the first time in 1947, as a delegate of the Free German Youth. In 1948, he supported Yugoslavia, was accused of being a "Titoist", and with help of Yugoslav representatives in Berlin he fled to Yugoslavia in 1949, where he worked until autumn 1950, when he moved to West Germany and worked within the pro-Yugoslav Independent Workers' Party of Germany (UAPD).

6 The Direction for Information was an institution responsible for Yugoslav propaganda abroad. It existed until 1952, when it transformed into Department for Press and Information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The pro-Yugoslav stance of Wolfgang Leonhard was not an isolated phenomenon among European communists, and was not merely a result of their insights in the Yugoslav development, but much more a product of the way they perceived their own position, or, as Leonhard put it, because of the feeling of a "political sickness" (*politische Bauchschmerzen*) (Leonhard, 1955, 487–488). Their personal disagreements with the official party line, their dissatisfaction with the party life, as well as a "satellite" dependence on Moscow culminated in the question of Yugoslavia. As German communists themselves stated during a discussion about the Yugoslav issue: "*This does not concern only the CPY – it concerns all of us.*" (DAMSP, PA, 1949, f. 80, dos. 4, br. 413811). Purges of the "Titoists" from communist parties across Europe only increased the number of those who identified their own struggles with that of Yugoslavia. Consequently, the Yugoslav Military mission in Berlin was showered by letters of support and solidarity (DAMSP, PA, 1949, f. 81, dos. 22, br. 414581). Radio Belgrade and the Yugoslav Embassy in Paris were contacted in August 1948 by the Spanish communist José del Barrio[7] with a request for a constant supply of informational materials about the CPY (AJ, 507/IX, 122/III-1). Yugoslav representatives abroad also strove to establish personal contacts with potential Yugoslav allies, albeit in the first time almost exclusively with (ex) members of communist parties (AJ, 507/IX, 48/III-1).[8]

Although the ideological framework dictated the quest for support only amongst communists, when Yugoslav foreign policy started searching for other ways out of the isolation, those ideological explanations and qualifications had to be revised. The key shift occurred during 1949 and the new foreign political orientation was proclaimed at the end of the year in Edvard Kardelj's speeches in the UN General Assembly,[9] and at the Third Plenum of the CPY. Having in mind, on the one hand, the "*aggressive Soviet policy towards Yugoslavia*", and on the other hand, "*the US role in protecting the small countries' sovereignty*", Kardelj suggested that Yugoslavia should make most of the existing "contradictions" within the "capitalist" world. Lessons from the East should help Yugoslavia establish ties with as many western countries as possible, in order to avoid becoming politically and economically dependent on a single country. Kardelj's words imply that, led by the aim of breaking through isolation, the Yugoslav leadership abandoned looking at the West as a monolithic capitalist and anti-democratic camp, a thesis which they wholeheartedly supported only two years before.[10] In late 1949, they

7 José del Barrio Navarro (1907–1989) was a Spanish communist, a former member of the Central Committee of the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia. He participated in the Spanish civil war. Del Barrio was expelled from the party for his disapproval of the Soviet foreign policy in 1943. He was one of the founding members of the pro-Yugoslav Acci**ó**n socialista.

8 In the summer of 1948, the CPY started paying more attention to foreign political issues. Consequently, the Foreign Minister became Edvard Kardelj, and Ambassadors to those capitals which were deemed most important became "trusted" party members, usually pre-war communists (Selinić, 2011; Selinić, 2014). Therefore, Yugoslav diplomatic representatives abroad also played a significant role in the foreign policy of the CPY.

9 For more on Kardelj's speech in the UN General Assembly on September 26th, 1949, see: Jovanović, 1985.

10 At the first meeting of the Cominform in September 1947, the Yugoslav representatives supported the Soviet thesis laid out in Zhdanov's speech, that the world was divided in two camps, the "anti-imperialist and democratic", one under the leadership of the USSR and an "imperialist and reactionary" one led by the USA (Pons, 2014, 162–167).

saw "contradictions" within the West, which were to be used to their own advantage (Petranović, Končar & Radonjić, 1985, 469–482).

Regarding the situation within the international workers' movement, Edvard Kardelj assessed that the Soviet Union's influence was in decline, as was the power of the communist parties in the West. However, he was sure that the crisis within the workers' movement, caused by the Yugoslav-Soviet split, would develop at the expense of the "imperialist" countries, and in favor of Yugoslavia. Kardelj insisted that it was the support of the "masses" that would prove decisive in the battle against the USSR. Yugoslavia was, therefore, to capitalize on growing spontaneous sympathies for its cause, as well as to actively fight for support "from below" both within communist and social-democratic "masses" and against their party leaderships. Kardelj underlined that there were certain "currents within the workers' movement" in the West, that hoped for an emergence of a political force connected with and devoted to their countries and people. He was sure that "subjective forces" capable of gathering all these currents would appear in these countries, and "*we are obliged to contribute as much as we can*" to help them. Furthermore, Yugoslavia had to cooperate more actively with "*all progressive democratic movements in the world*", although not "*through a new International, but through democratic cooperation on equal basis*" (Petranović, Končar & Radonjić, 1985, 469–482).

A change from the previous period is also noticeable in the attitude towards the international workers' movement. The conviction that the crisis within the workers' movement would ultimately have a positive outcome for the cause of socialism was based on the determinist presumption of a socialist future and a firm belief that the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was the one who took over and held high "*the banner of socialism, which Stalin had dragged through the mud*" (Dedijer, 1991, 330). The key distinction from the previous period laid in the choice of allies – alongside communist "masses" Kardelj underlined the "masses" gathered around social democratic parties as Yugoslav companions in this "historical" mission. Abandoning the vision of a monolithic imperialist western camp led to realizing that there were "contradictions" among western states and a "socialist potential" within western social democracy. However, there was a certain collision between Kardelj's suggestion that the CPY should win over the "masses" from below against the party leaderships and an idea of "democratic cooperation on equal basis" with other "progressive" movements. It was precisely this contradiction which announced different methods in CPY's cooperation with west European left in the early 1950s.

However, contacts with "masses" in the West were underdeveloped and weak, and so was Yugoslav knowledge on West European parties and movements. Since foreign policy was gaining in importance, a Commission for International Relations and Ties (CIRT) was established by the Central Committee of the CPY.[11] One of the first moves

11 At the Third plenum of the CPY in December 1949, Kardelj's proposal to establish a foreign political commission of the Central Committee was adopted. Its purpose would be to coordinate the work of various institutions and bodies dealing with foreign policy (Petranović, Končar & Radonjić, 1985, 482). The Politburo of the CPY established the foreign political council/commission in February 1950. Its members were:

the Commission undertook was deploying of "trusted comrades", tasked with gathering information and establishing contacts with West European leftists abroad. In March 1950, Vlado Kozak, a pre-war Slovenian communist and a man undoubtedly trusted by Edvard Kardelj,[12] embarked on a road to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). In his report from West Germany Vlado Kozak described political apathy among German communists, a lack of knowledge about the Yugoslav-Soviet split, and an insufficient awareness of the "*worldwide importance of the Yugoslav struggle against revisionism*". He assessed that Josef Schappe,[13] a CPY's informant within the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) recently expelled from the party ranks under the accusation of being a "Titoist", was most distinguished among the party "dissidents" in West Germany. Vlado Kozak suggested that the "dissidents" be given an initial capital necessary for founding a newspaper, which would serve as a "gathering point" for dissatisfied communists, social democrats, and the undecided – a sort of a "national front", which would represent a nucleus of a new revolutionary communist party in Germany. "*Everyone who belongs to us socially has to be politically on our side as well*," Vlado Kozak concluded (AJ, 507/IX, 87/I-22). Agitators were also sent to Italy in order to gain better insight into the political situation and potential perspectives for Yugoslav penetration there. Franc Štoka travelled to Rome, Torino, Milano, Naples, Bologna, and other Italian cities. Establishing a newspaper as a base for a wider movement was deemed the most suitable way for achieving influence in Italy as well (AJ, 507/IX, 48/III-2; Tenca Montini & Mišić, 2017, 797). Certain contacts with pro-Yugoslav communists in Italy had already existed, and even Kardelj himself mentioned the "independent communists" within the Communist Party of Italy (PCI) as an example of a "force" within the workers' movement in Italy, which could serve as Yugoslavia's stronghold (Petranović, Končar & Radonjić, 1985, 478).

Based partly on the reports of Yugoslav "comrades" who were on missions abroad, and mostly on the information gathered from Yugoslav informants in communist parties across Europe, a high intelligence officer Maks Baće[14] prepared a report on the "Situation in the workers' movement and progressive parties in Western European countries" for the CIRT meetings held on May 27th and June 12th, 1950 (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-1). Was spreading the truth about Yugoslavia and defending the country abroad the only task of the CPY in the West? – no, such an approach was "passive", "insufficient", and even "negative", assessed Maks Baće. Yugoslavia had to be "active" and "offensive". What mattered was not only who it fought against, but what it fought for. A struggle for the victory of so-

Edvard Kardelj, Veljko Vlahović, Vladimir Dedijer, Đuro Salaj, Rodoljub Čolaković, Milentije Popović, Vida Tomšič, Petar Stambolić, Milijan Neoričić, Pavle Gregorić, Slobodan Penezić, Miloš Minić, Otmar Kreačić, and Leo Mates (Petranović & Dautović, 1999, 65).

12 In 1920s Vlado Kozak drafted both Edvard Kardelj and Boris Kidrič to the Communist Party.

13 Josef Schappe (1907–1994) was a German communist, and resistance fighter. After the liberation of Buchenwald, Schappe re-joined the Communist Party of Germany, served as a high party functionary in North Rhine-Westphalia and the editor in chief of the Party organ Freies Volk. In early 1950, Schappe was expelled from the KPD under the accusation of being a "Titoist". He was one of the founders of the pro-Yugoslav Independent Workers' Party of Germany (UAPD).

14 Maks Baće was the head of the State Security Administration's first department, which was responsible for gathering intelligence abroad.

cialism in the world was at the same the struggle for the victory of socialism in Europe and in Yugoslavia (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-1). Analogue to Kardelj's words that the CPY was to win over both communist and social democratic "masses", Maks Baće insisted that both communists and socialists were the CPY's target group, as well as individuals in syndicates, factories and workers' councils. "Anglo-American imperialism" and "reaction" in some European countries were still deemed as enemies of socialism (and, therefore of Yugoslavia), but the main obstacle to the victory of socialism was the policy of the USSR. Baće criticized the Soviet doctrine about the division of the world into two camps (which was unconditionally supported by the Yugoslavs at the first Cominform meeting in 1947), as a strategy serving the "great-Russian hegemonism", and not the interests of a socialist revolution. In such a situation, "*the Yugoslav resistance was a call to arms for a real socialism*" (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-1). Based on the information he gathered, Maks Baće concluded that there was a "revolutionary situation" in all western countries. It did not mean that the situation was ripe for a revolution, but that the workers' masses in the West were disorientated, which made it easier for the CPY to stand out as an ally and a signpost to the future. The CPY was meant to help the "forces of socialism" liberate themselves from both eastern and western hegemonies, achieve workers' unity, and ultimately seize power (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-2).

Based on the assessment that the communist parties were in crisis, and that new workers' movements were spontaneously emerging across Europe, Yugoslavia's assistance to the workers' movement in Western Europe was considered not only an option but a duty. In his report, Maks Baće focused on the newly emerging movements in Italy, West Germany, and among the Spanish emigres. Although no distinguished party functionary had left the Communist Party of Italy so far, in numerous towns and factories individuals or even whole groups were stepping out of the party. Furthermore, independent leftist intellectuals, former partisan fighters, "centrists" within the Socialist Party of Italy (PSI), left wing of Christian democrats, and Communist Party of Trieste were among those heterogeneous "currents" Yugoslavs counted on. However, the task at hand was to unite them. Contacts were also established with the Spanish emigres stationed in France and Mexico. Among them were several former Central Committee members of the Communist Party of Spain – José del Barrio, Jesus Hernandez, Felix Montiel. Despite certain disunity among them, and the fact that they were living in different countries, the Spanish were assessed as the most active allies when it came to pleas for help. Maks Baće considered the situation in West Germany to be "the ripest" for founding a new movement. Just like Vlado Kozak, Maks Baće also stated that the movement was developing around Josef Schappe (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-2).

Vladimir Dedijer later wrote that the "dogmatists" within the CPY, Aleksandar Ranković and Maks Baće above all, presented the main obstacle to cooperation with the social democrats, whereas Edvard Kardelj opted for establishing ties with massive socialist parties in the West as means of breaking through the isolation the country found itself in. Thanks to the arguments provided by Vlado Kozak, Kardelj managed to win over Đilas and then Tito (Dedijer, 1991, 333, 371–372). However, the already mentioned report Vlado Kozak wrote in March 1950 partially negates Dedijer's statements, given

the fact that Kozak gave almost no notice about the German social democrats and focused exclusively on the possibilities of cooperating with the KPD dissidents (AJ, 507/IX, 87/I-22). Still, the notes from the CIRT meeting do witness that already in May/June 1950 Kardelj was indeed skeptical towards the idea of establishing new revolutionary parties "between the two camps" – social democrats and communists – fearing that such an orientation would ultimately lead to marginalization (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-2). What he proposed, however, was still far from cooperation with social democratic leaderships based on the principle of non-interference. In Kardelj's opinion, the CPY had to penetrate the communist, social-democratic, and "bourgeois-democratic" groups, and establish and "somehow" link those cells, which would support the Yugoslav position in certain questions. For him, the key issue was how to avoid turning those cells into "isolated groups". The creation of newspapers and journals focused on critiquing and debating with the USSR was of utmost importance. Kardelj was not against providing financial, ideological and organizational aid to allies in the West, but was skeptical towards creation of "close, non-inclusionary" parties. Vladimir Dedijer himself stated at the same meeting that, depending on the situation in each of the countries, the CPY should sometimes create new parties and sometimes use already existing ones, or currents within them (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-2).

At the meeting of the CPY Politburo on June 28th, 1950, Kardelj pointed out that "*a mass movement based on the same principles*" as Yugoslavia was emerging abroad, but warned against the "sectarianism" of the CIRT's members, which prevented them from getting in touch with socialists and made them susceptible to leftist, especially Trotskyist, phrases. A motion was carried that Ranković, Tempo, and Đilas join and lead the Commission. To Kardelj's speech Tito added that

> *last year it was too early for creating an organization. Now it is not. We don't have to be a command center. Our policy should be – counselling. In West Germany we were too slow. Now we need to have a strong leadership, which should not manage movements, but only our people* (Bekić, 1988, 165).

Despite certain internal disagreements about the future steps, a broad concordance existed in the Yugoslav leadership that a new mass movement was arising in Western Europe. However, the CPY was not meant to establish and guide narrow parties unconditionally loyal to Yugoslavia, but to gather a mass workers' movement instead. Although it was stated that Yugoslavia should not directly manage those movements, the principle of cooperation was still far from non-interference. Each of the groups was to be led by individuals with direct connection to Yugoslavia. Already established contacts with pro-Yugoslav leftists in various countries were to be used for the creation of "independent" socialist parties throughout Europe.

Already on March 24th, 1950, whilst meeting with Wolfgang Leonhard, the CIRT representatives discussed his departure for the FRG. Leonhard proposed the "minimal" and "maximal" goals of his return to Germany – the minimal would be disseminating Yugoslav propaganda material, and the maximal a creation of an "independent Marxist organization" from the members of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD),

ex-communists, and other minor leftist organizations (AJ, 507/IX, 87/III-1). The Yugoslavs supported his propositions but concluded that Leonhard was not the best choice for a leading figure, due to the fact that his ties to Belgrade were already well-known. However, as an undoubtedly "Yugoslav man" within the movement, he was crucial for the contacts with Belgrade, which were to be established via colonel Momčilo Sibinović from the Yugoslav Military mission in Berlin. The leading role in the new movement was therefore given to Josef Schappe. Leonhard moved to West Germany in November 1950, tasked with "joining" the movement around Schappe and the *Freie Tribüne* journal.[15]

The situation was somewhat more chaotic in Italy until 1951, when Valdo Cucchi and Aldo Magnani[16] left the PCI. Already prior to 1950 contacts were established with certain groups in Italy, and during that year an action was taken for their uniting. The Yugoslavs bought the journals *Ombibus* from Milan and *Politica nuova* from Rome. Yugoslav diplomats in Italy, who handled these activities, placed the most trust in the "Roman group" led by Davide Domenico, Communardo Morelli and Pierleone Macini. They were already in contact with the Yugoslav side from 1949 and were all ex-communists (AJ, 507/IX, 48/III-2; Tenca Montini & Mišić, 2017, 798; Mišić, 2015, 288).

Contacts were also established with the Spanish ex-communist emigres in France and Mexico. Already in 1949 José del Barrio got in touch with the Yugoslavs in Paris, and in summer 1950 the CPY supported his journal and movement Acción socialista (MAS). In May 1950, Aleš Bebler was sent to Mexico to bolster the cooperation with the group around Jesús Hernández[17] (AJ, 507/IX, 122/III-20). In September 1950, a delegation of the Spanish emigres visited Yugoslavia, and the Yugoslavs were committed to unifying the Spanish pro-Yugoslav emigres from various countries. All mentioned groups were financed by Yugoslavia. The money trail is hard to follow due to the lack of sources and the fact that only individuals were privy to the financial transactions.[18]

15 After being expelled from the KPD Josef Schappe and Georg Fischer organized two meetings of (ex-)communists disappointed in the KPD (in May and July 1950) in Rattingen. As a result, the weekly newspaper Freie Tribüne (the first issue was published on August 12th, 1950) and a committee responsible for preparing the founding congress of the Party were established. The independent workers' movement consisted of several groups: ex-members of the communist party, Trotskyists, and several local groups of independent socialists. Wolfgang Leonhard joined the movement in November 1950 and became responsible for preparing the program of the new party, which was founded in March 1951. The Independent Workers' Party of Germany (UAPD) disbanded in 1952. For more on the UAPD, see: Kulemann, 1978; Kritidis, 2008.

16 Aldo Cucchi (1911–1983) and Valdo Magnani (1912–1982) were Italian communists. Cucchi was a surgeon and a member of the resistance movement during the war. Magnani was a philosophy professor and a member of the Garibaldi brigade in Yugoslavia. After they left the PCI in January 1951, the Party launched a campaign against them. They soon got in touch with the CPY, which supported them both politically and financially.

17 Jesús Hernández Tomás (1907–1971) was a distinguished Spanish communist, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain, and of the Executive Committee of the Communist International after the end of the Spanish Civil War. In 1943 he was sent from Moscow to Mexico but was expelled from the Party in 1944. He was the leading figure of the Acción socialista movement in Mexico.

18 It is difficult to say with certainty how much money the CPY spent on financial assistance to "independent socialists" in West Europe. The money was usually being transferred to them via Yugoslav diplomatic representatives abroad. However, neither were all members of the embassy stuff informed about these activities (usually only "trusted" CPY members in the embassies knew about it), nor were all members of the movements in question aware of the Yugoslav financial help. The CPY covered the costs of publishing

Although there was a unique political situation in each of the countries, as were the Yugoslav allies, the general political line of the CPY towards anti-Cominform communists was well coordinated. In late 1950, it was expressed in the address of Rodoljub Čolaković, the president of the Subcommission for Germany and Austria. In his words, the goal of the Subcommission "*was not merely to study the situation in those countries, but to substantially aid the comrades in Germany in creating a mass democratic movement of the working class within our possibilities*." Schappe's movement faced the "danger" of turning into a narrow, isolated party, and not a mass revolutionary movement the Yugoslavs foresaw. "*We have to make sure that it does not happen*," stated Čolaković (AJ, 507/IX, 87/IX-7).

These "dangers" partly derived from the difficulties Yugoslavia experienced in penetrating the social-democratic "masses". Kardelj's idea of gaining support "from below" and against the party leaderships, was only a limited success. The first substantial contacts the CPY established with big socialist parties were those with the British Labour Party.[19] However, they were not a result of a "penetration from below" but the cooperation with the leadership. The fact that the Labour Party was the first western socialist party to establish contacts with Yugoslavia was probably the result of the fact that it was in power, which meant that a confluence of state and party interests occurred in this case. A Labour Party delegation visited Yugoslavia in September 1950, and it was soon followed by the visit of Đilas and Dedijer to London (and Paris) in January 1951. For the general public, their visit had a "private" character, but in fact its main aim was procurement of military aid. The nature of these contacts crucially influenced how the CPY leaders further perceived the methods and goals of their cooperation with the European left.

Đilas' report from his trip to Britain marked a break from the party policy Kardelj outlined in December 1949. The focus was no longer on fighting for "masses from below". Instead, Đilas suggested cooperation with the Labour Party, without confronting its leadership. He added though that it was necessary to "*support various left groups* [within the Labour Party] *ideologically, through discussions and contacts*". Đilas assessed that socialist parties would not split into two wings and that it was more prudent "*to create strong conscious groups within the movements, which would gain followers, and* [...] *start assuming leading positions*" in the party and state. He further claimed that the Commission needed to abandon the misconception of looking at "*the revolutionary socialist movement only through communist parties which broke away from the Cominform.*" The goal should rather be a creation of a "*certain ideological left, which would, on the far-left*

newspapers abroad and payed monthly salaries to the movements' leaderships. According to P. Kulemann, 14 members of the UAPD received salaries from the CPY, and the overall amount of money at their disposal was far bigger than that of any other leftist movement (apart from SPD and KPD) in West Germany at the time (Kulemann, 1978, 69–85). According to Yugoslav sources, the money spent on the UAPD until August 1951 amounted to ca. 500.000 marks (AJ, 507/IX, III-1-49). For the costs of publishing the newspaper *Risorgimento socialista* and several brochures, the CPY assisted the USI with 18 million liras only in the first half of 1954. The USI representatives assessed that they would need around 5 million liras for the forthcoming elections in Sicilia, and ca. 20 million for elections in Northern Italy, and counted on "socialist solidarity" of the CPY. (AJ, 507/IX, 48/III-17).

19 For more on Yugoslav relations with the British Labour Party, see: Štrbac, 1988; Miletić, 2011; Unkovski-Korica, 2014; Mijatov, 2015; Miletić, 2017; Režek, 2018.

wing of these parties [mass socialist parties]*, lead the fight for* [workers'] *unity*." Dedijer seconded his belief that in Yugoslavia the development of the workers' movement was still observed "through the Soviet lenses" and that people did not understand that there were "elements of socialism" in the capitalist West as well. Kardelj also shared their new convictions and emphasized Đilas' stay in Britain as an example for future policy towards the West European left. "*He went to the Labour Party and what was the outcome? On the one hand, a pure benefit for the state, and on the other hand the left there was encouraged, and it now exudes much more pressure onto the party leadership regarding Yugoslavia*." Therefore, it was not in Yugoslavia's interest to weaken the Labour and to support its dissolution, but rather to aid those ideas which were "*growing on the left of social democracy – to dominate those parties*" (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-4). For Kardelj as a Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia, state benefits were playing a major role.

The cooperation with the British Labour Party slowly paved the way for the cooperation with other social-democratic parties (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-6). The ideological explanation for these steps was not found only in the existence of "elements of socialism" in the West but also in the claim that through cooperation with the mass parties Yugoslavia actually fought the battle for the unity of the workers' movement. However, suspicions arose that Yugoslav activities around the formation and organization of anti-Cominform communists could harm their relations with social democracy. As Dedijer stated, Schappe's movement was "*gaining traction and questions were raised in Germany whether Yugoslavia was behind it*" (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-4). The Social Democratic Party of Germany also protested to the Yugoslavs for creating "a rift in Germany" by supporting Schappe's Independent Workers' Party (UAPD), which had no chances of success (AJ 507/IX, 87/II-13). While discussing the perspectives of Domenico's movement in Italy in late 1950, Yugoslavs assessed that that it was still incapable of transforming into a party, due to the fact that it was overly "sectarian", and not willing to attract other "democratic elements" (AJ, 507/IX, s/b-4). Kardelj and Đilas recommended that the political platform of *Politica nuova* be the struggle for peace, the hostility towards NATO and the USSR, and the defense of the state. "*They should not parrot our stances,*" and they should not focus only on anti-Cominform communists. Their key goal should be socialist unity (AJ, 507/IX, s/b-5).

Whereas at the beginning of 1951, the Yugoslav leaders generally agreed that Schappe's movement had only slight chances to succeed, that its leaders were "sectarians" and "dogmatists", who were neglecting the idea of creating a mass movement, and favoring a narrow Bolshevik party instead, Aldo Cucchi and Valdo Magnani left the PCI. It seemed that the PCI was in a state of a deep crisis, in which the group around Cucchi and Magnani had great chances of transforming into a mass movement, which sparked enthusiasm within the CPY. Based on the assessments of Yugoslav Ambassador in Rome Mladen Iveković, and talks Tito's personal secretary Nikola Mandić held with Magnani, the Yugoslavs decided that the existing groups of "independent communists", which were up to that point assisted by the CPY, should join Cucchi's and Magnani's movement.[20] The newspapers *Omnibus* and *Po-*

20 After leaving the Communist Party of Italy in early 1951, Aldo Cucchi and Valdo Magnani founded a new Italian Workers' Movement (Movimento dei lavoratori italiani – MLI), and started publishing a new journal,

litica nuova were soon closed (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-4; AJ, 507/IX, s/b-13; Tenca Montini & Mišić, 2017, 800–803).

At the meeting of the Commission for International Relations and Ties in February 1951, Kardelj underlined that Magnani "*was right in aiming to gather all socialist forces into a single movement*," unlike Schappe, who insisted on creating "a pure revolutionary party" (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-4). He suggested that the CPY focus on cooperation with the SPD but was still not ready to fully give up ties with the UAPD. Kardelj proposed that the CPY continue providing financial assistance to Schappe's movement, hoping that it would either grow, or that new leading figures would emerge in West Germany, as it was the case in Italy (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-4). In other words, Kardelj still believed that there was a "revolutionary situation" in Germany, and that a new mass movement could emerge, but he increasingly doubted that Schappe and other UAPD leaders were capable of fulfilling this "historical" task.

The decision to foster cooperation with social democrats did not mean an immediate break of all ties with anti-Cominform communists. However, it did incite attempts to influence a change in their policies. To that aim Đilas met with Josef Schappe and Wolfgang Geese in January 1951, when he tried to persuade them that, as true socialists, they had to follow the masses, which were in West Germany gathered around the SPD. He underlined Aneurin Bevan's decision to criticize the British Labour Party leadership but stay within the party as a righteous example (AJ, 507/IX, 87/III-8). At the meeting with Leonhard in the summer of 1951 Đilas repeated similar advice – he thought that it was not prudent to create fractions within the SPD, and suggested supporting the social democrats in issues, in which they had a common stance, and in others to engage in constructive discussions. The official cooperation between the two parties (UAPD and SPD) should be established, the independence of the UAPD maintained, but "*the boundaries should be loosened*". Đilas' conclusion was that the UAPD should not be disbanded, but the eventual possibility of its integration into the SPD should not be ruled out. During the discussion of the Subcommission for Germany an argument was raised that it was easier to influence the SPD masses through an organization than individuals (AJ, 507/IX, III-29). Despite the fact that the financial aid to the UAPD was approved in August 1951, it was stopped already in December. The fact that the financing was continued for four months, even though the Yugoslav side was aware of the weaknesses of the UAPD, indicates that the CPY leaders considered the UAPD to be a potential mediator in the process of nearing to social democrats. However, such assessments were false and illusory, and soon after the party cooperation with the SPD became an imperative, all financial assistance to the UAPD was ceased. The UAPD disbanded shortly afterward.

The attempt to maintain simultaneous relations both with "independent socialists" and social democrats failed in the case of Germany. During spring 1951, it was also assessed that Yugoslavia made an error in dealing with the Spanish emigration, because it focused solely on Acción socialista (AJ, 507/IX, 122/III-11). In June 1951, discussions took place about the forthcoming visit of a Spanish delegation to the Congress for peace in Zagreb. This delegation

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Risorgimento socialista. Together with several other socialist groups, the Movement merged into the Union of Independent Socialists (L'Unione Socialista Indipendente – USI) in March 1953. The CPY was interested in supporting the movement until the reconciliation with the USSR and consequently with the PCI as well.

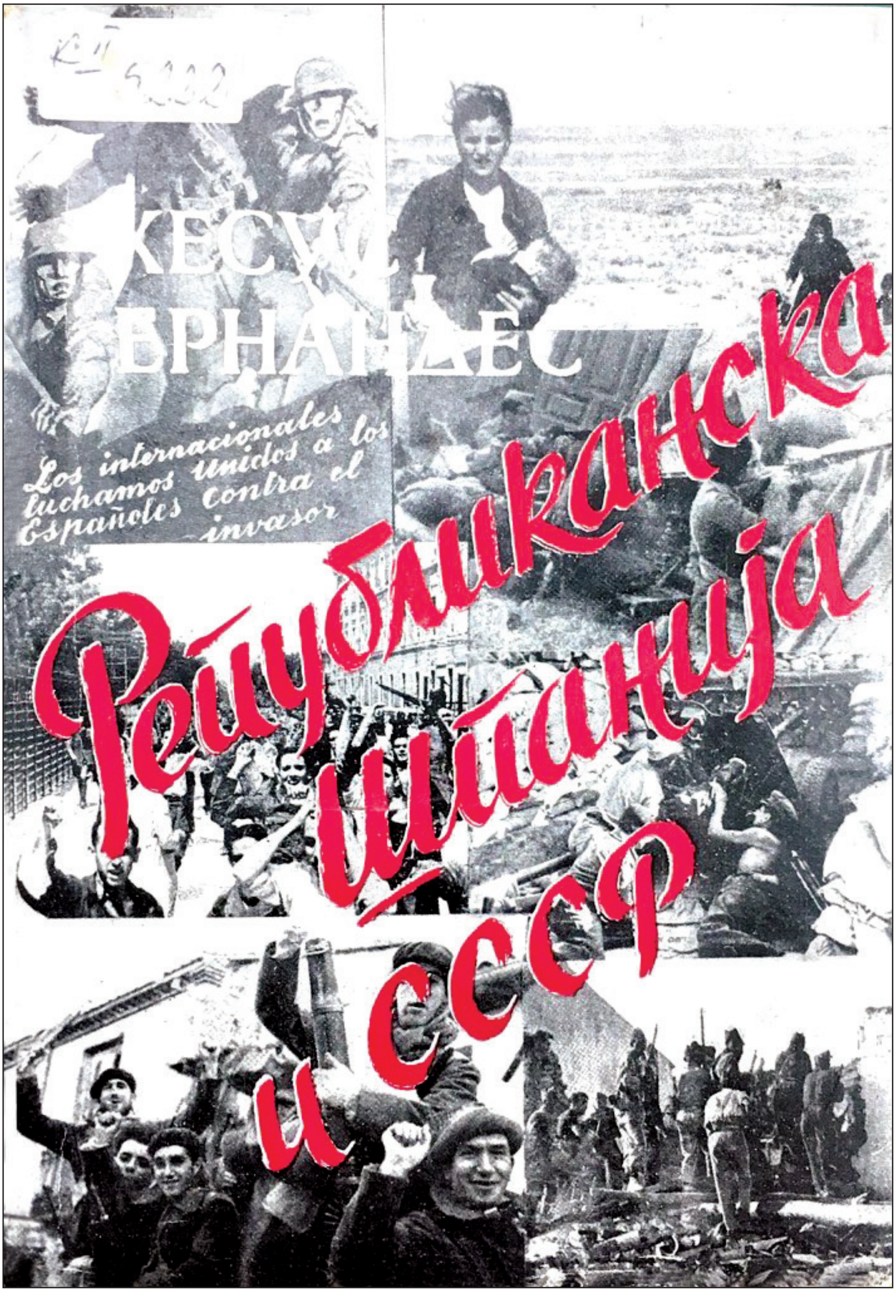


Fig. 2: Front page of the journal Freie Tribüne on the occasion of the foundation of the UAPD, 6 April 1951 (Library of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation).

was supposed to consist of the Acción socialista members, the representatives of the Spanish Republican Government in exile, and other Spanish socialists (AJ, 507/IX, 122/III-14). However, already at the meeting of the Subcommission for France, Belgium, Holland and Spain in November 1951, its members concluded that the Acción socialista was internally torn, and that Yugoslavia should therefore focus on cooperation with socialists and anarchists. The Acción socialista was not meant to be disbanded, "*but should be given a different course*" (AJ, 507/IX, s/b-41). At a meeting with Đilas and Dedijer in December 1951, José del Barrio stated that "*we should primarily be focused on the unification of political forces in the emigration, and not on a creation of a narrow party. What we want to crate is a broad movement of workers*." However, in the original document his words were underlined by the Yugoslavs with a short note: "*Are they capable*?" (AJ, 507/IX, 122/III-17). Although Del Barrio's plan was supported by the Yugoslavs, serious concerns about the capabilities of Acción socialista were already evident. Therefore, Spanish socialists and anarchists, who were described as groups which "mean something" in Spain, were to become the key partners in the future (AJ, 507/IX, s/b-44). The initial enthusiasm about Cucchi's and Magnani's movement in Italy was followed by a disappointment in their achievements already in October 1951, and a realization that they failed to establish a foothold in the syndicates (AJ, 507/IX, 48/III-9). Moreover, poor election results in 1952 and 1953, despite Yugoslav financial aid, also looked discouraging (Tenca Montini & Mišić, 2017, 803).

Although the CPY maintained contacts and financial assistance to the "independent socialists" in Italy and among the Spanish émigrés during 1952, cooperation with West European social democrats was gradually acquiring the central position in its relations with the European left. This was confirmed in an analysis of relations with socialist movements and parties in September 1952 (shortly before the Sixth Congress of the CPY), in which social democratic parties were underlined as CPY's "most important" partners in Europe (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-6). The document provides a short chronological overview of steps the CPY undertook in the West after the break with the Cominform, thereby making a clear distinction between the "initial errors" caused by the "dogmatism" of certain party members, which manifested itself in cooperation with "sectarians" in West Germany, and a "justified" support for all those anti-Cominform movements in the West fighting for the workers' unity, such as Italians and the Spanish (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-6). Such an explanation was an attempt to rationalize the steps the CPY had been making in previous years, given the fact that there had initially been no difference in Yugoslav policy towards anti-Cominform communists throughout Europe. In West Germany such a policy was least successful for a plenty of reasons. On the one hand, individuals gathered around the UAPD probably contributed to its failure, but on the other hand, the SPD made it clear that the CPY had to choose between cooperation with them, and support for Schappe's movement. Relations with the SPD indeed improved considerably after the CPY ceased its financial assistance to the UAPD. Alongside all of this, West Germany had by the time become the most important economic partner of Yugoslavia in Western Europe. Under the circumstances of a prolonged economic blockade from the East, harsh winters and arising famine in the country, the Yugoslav leaders were not in a position to run the risk of losing economic assistance from Bonn, due to their interference into the political life of the FRG (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-11).

In the Spanish case, the attempt to simultaneously cooperate with social democrats and anti-Cominform communists ran into obstacles as well. Although the Acción socialista was outlawed by the French Government in the summer of 1952, contacts and financing continued. However, Jose del Barrio complained that the contacts were fading already before the Sixth Congress of the CPY, and that they almost completely stopped afterwards. As the key reason for this change of attitude he named the Yugoslav cooperation with the Spanish socialists. The Yugoslav side assessed that the MAS leaders "*had a sectarian point of view*", since they complained about Radio Yugoslavia's broadcasts about Spanish socialists, and the visit of Rodolfo Llopis[21] to Yugoslavia, thereby aiming to monopolize the Yugoslav support. "*They are honest, albeit sectarians*," concluded Veljko Vlahović (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-14). The Commission for International Relations and Ties concluded in March 1953 that "*all material assistance to a single movement in any country is in fact an interference in the internal affairs of that country and an aggression*." Having that in mind, it was debated whether the aid to the Spanish emigres should be continued (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-5). Less than two months later, at a meeting of the Commission's representatives with several Yugoslav ambassadors (to Rome, Paris, Bonn, and London), the same conclusion was reached: "*Supporting a movement in a country means turning it into our satellite. Internationalism is based on mutual discussion, moral and political support. We, therefore, ceased all financial support to Cucchi and Magnani*." This was followed by a conclusion that "*in our foreign relations we must refrain from any covert activities*" (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-11).

The contacts with Del Barrio continued during the following decades, as did the financial aid, but they amounted to personal contacts. Del Barrio was financed through the Yugoslav embassy in Paris and in turn he provided regular reports about the state of the Spanish emigration, wrote articles for Yugoslav press and radio broadcasts, thereby becoming a sort of a Yugoslav informant abroad (AJ, 507/IX, 122/III-1-67; AJ, 507/IX, 122/III-68-112). The assistance to Cucchi and Magnani did not stop in 1953, although efforts were made to "legalize" it through the company OPIMES,[22] which, however, proved unsuccessful. Yugoslavia continued financing them "in the old way" for a while, but ultimately stopped providing financial aid altogether (AJ, 507/IX, 48/III-21). The Union of Independent Socialists (USI) representatives complained that without it they could neither exist as a movement nor could they publish their journal (AJ, 507/IX, 48/III-26). The decision to quit aiding the USI coincided with the Yugoslav reconciliation with the USSR and the rapprochement with the PCI and the PSI. Yugoslavia provided financial aid to the USI for the last time in 1957 (Tenca Montini & Mišić, 2017, 806).

The fact that the CPY stopped giving financial aid to the anti-Cominform movements did not mean it stopped all contacts with individuals. For example, Wolfgang Leonhard wrote in January 1952 to Rodoljub Čolaković, notifying him that his new book about the

21 Rodolfo Llopis Ferrándiz (1895–1983) was the General Secretary of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party in exile (1944–1972).

22 OPIMES was an enterprise founded in 1954. It was meant to do business with Yugoslav companies and earn money necessary for financing political activities of the USI. However, the firm proved unprofitable and Yugoslavs continued their financial support for the USI.

USSR (*Sowjetunion – Schein und Wirklichkeit*) was ready for publishing. He enquired whether the Yugoslavs were willing to have it translated into Serbo-Croatian as well (AJ, 507/IX, 87/IX-55). The book was published in Belgrade in 1952 (Leonhard, 1952) and he soon agreed with Milovan Đilas to write a similar book about Yugoslavia (AJ, 507/IX, 87/IX-55). Contacts and financial aid to Del Barrio continued long after the Acción socialista disbanded. When institutional changes in Yugoslavia in 1973 put further financing at risk, Veljko Vlahović intervened. As a justification, he wrote: "*Those are friends who actively supported us in 1948, which costed them their jobs*." Del Barrio is sick, and "*it is not humane to leave him without aid after 24 years, although he currently has almost no contacts with us*" (AJ, 507/IX, 122/III-108).

During the "Đilas affair", all "independent communists" supported the Yugoslav leadership. Del Barrio stated in a letter to the CPY in spring 1954 that the "Đilas affair" was no surprise for him (AJ, 507/IX, 122/III-42), Magnani's articles in the Italian press about the affair were deemed "positive" (AJ, 507/IX, 48/III-17), and Wolfgang Leonhard campaigned against Đilas amongst the SPD members and leadership (AdSD, SNN-8). Once again, just like in 1948, "independent communists" stood on Tito's side and played their roles in Yugoslav propaganda abroad. However, five years after the break with the Cominform, the key foreign political orientation of the CPY was cooperation with social democracy. This cooperation went through several stages. After attempting to gain support of the "masses" against the party leadership, Yugoslavs turned to cooperating with the leadership whilst strengthening left-wing fractions within the parties. Finally, the CPY leaders decided to cooperate with socialist parties without interfering in their internal matters. At that point there was no need for an ideological justification:

> *With European socialist parties our connections are motivated by practical interests. The positions of those parties towards us should not be interpreted as a result of ideological understandings and we should keep in mind their geographical, international, and internal positions* (AJ, 507/IX, s/a-11).

In his memoirs Milovan Đilas concluded:

> *In that way, the Labour Party, alongside other European socialists, acted not only as a stepping stone in our cooperation with the West, but as an active force, which liberated us from isolation and ideological prejudice about communists as the only true representatives of the working class and socialism* (Đilas, 1983, 215).

For Đilas personally, these contacts may have been crucial for his renunciation of ideological dogmatism. However, the maturing of statesmanship instincts of the Yugoslav leaders was what crucially influenced this change of policy. Cooperation with social democratic parties proved to be far more efficient for breaking the isolation, as movements of "independent socialists" failed in becoming massive and influential parties. As rapprochement between Belgrade and Moscow took place after Stalin's death, the role of anti-Cominform communists in the CPY's struggle within the international workers' movement lost much of its relevance.

V ISKANJU AVTENTIČNE POZICIJE: ZAČETKI POLITIČNEGA IN IDEOLOŠKEGA SODELOVANJA MED JUGOSLAVIJO IN ZAHODNOEVROPSKO LEVICO, 1948–1953

Natalija DIMIĆ
Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, Trg Nikole Pašića 11, 11000 Beograd, Srbija
e-mail: natalija.dimic@inis.bg.ac.rs

POVZETEK

Do leta 1948 so bili jugoslovanski komunisti med najbolj zvestimi stalinisti, toda resolucija Informbiroja je radikalno spremenila ne le odnos med Beogradom in Moskvo, temveč tudi notranji in zunanjepolitični položaj Jugoslavije. Jugoslovansko vodstvo se je soočilo z dvema glavnima nalogama: prebojem mednarodne izolacije in bojem proti Informbiroju. Med junijem 1948 in koncem leta 1949 so se jugoslovanski voditelji na spremenjene razmere odzivali predvsem z zavračanjem obtožb z Vzhoda in vzpostavljanjem stikov s potencialnimi projugoslovanskimi zavezniki po Evropi, zlasti med (nekdanjimi) komunisti. Leta 1950 so se odločili za aktivnejšo politiko, ki se je izrazila v poskusih organiziranja različnih skupin nezadovoljnih komunistov in socialistov v širša gibanja "neodvisnih socialistov" v zahodnoevropskih državah. V ta namen so Jugoslovani zagotovili finančno in organizacijsko podporo Neodvisni delavski stranki v Zahodni Nemčiji, Italijanskemu delavskemu gibanju in gibanju španskih emigrantov Acción socialista. Jugoslovansko sodelovanje s temi gibanji je bilo spodbujeno tako s poskusi preboja izolacije kot z zmotnim prepričanjem, da se bodo razvila v množična gibanja, ki bodo sposobna spodkopati moskovsko prevlado v mednarodnem delavskem gibanju. Toda bolj kot to, se je za koristno izkazalo sodelovanje z zahodnoevropskimi socialdemokratskimi strankami, zato so Jugoslovani že leta 1951 začeli spreminjati svoj odnos do "neodvisnih socialistov".

Ključne besede: Komunistična partija Jugoslavije, neodvisni socialisti, socialdemokracija, komunizem, zahodnoevropska levica

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THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN YUGOSLAV COMMUNISTS AND SCANDINAVIAN SOCIALISTS IN THE LIGHT OF YUGOSLAV SOURCES (1950–1953)

Aleksandar V. MILETIĆ
Institute for Recent History of Serbia, Trg Nikole Pašića 11, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia
e-mail: samiletic82@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

After the Cominform Resolution in 1948 and the beginning of the Yugoslav-Soviet conflict, the Yugoslav leadership faced a completely new foreign policy situation. Under threat from the East, Yugoslavia was forced to seek new ways of co-operation in foreign policy, now in the West, among ideological "enemies". In such a situation, cooperation with the socialist Left in the West was one of the least harmful alternatives. The aim of the article is a brief analysis of the first steps of cooperation between Yugoslav communists and Scandinavian socialists from 1950 to 1953. The analysis includes the most important meetings, correspondence, and mutual exchanges of experiences and opinions of the leading representatives of both sides. The article is an attempt to establish through the available Yugoslav historical sources the similarities and differences, possibilities and obstacles to the cooperation of Yugoslavia with the Scandinavian socialist options in the circumstances of the Cold War.

Keywords: Yugoslav communists, Scandinavian socialists, social democracy, socialism, ideology

LE RELAZIONI TRA I COMUNISTI JUGOSLAVI E I SOCIALISTI SCANDINAVI ALLA LUCE DELLE FONTI JUGOSLAVE (1950–1953)

SINTESI

Dopo la Risoluzione del Cominform (1948) e l'inizio del conflitto jugoslavo-sovietico, la leadership jugoslava dovette affrontare una situazione di politica estera completamente nuova. Minacciata dall'Est, la Jugoslavia fu costretta a cercare nuove vie di cooperazione in politica estera, nell'Ovest, tra i "nemici ideologici". In tale situazione la cooperazione con la sinistra socialista dell'Europa occidentale si presentava come una delle alternative meno pregiudizievoli. Il tema del presente articolo è una breve analisi dei primi passi verso la cooperazione tra i comunisti jugoslavi e i socialisti scandinavi tra il 1950 e 1953. L'analisi comprende i più importanti incontri, corrispondenze e scambi di esperienze e opinioni tra i principali rappresentanti delle due parti. L'articolo vuole stabilire, in base alle fonti storiche disponibili, le analogie e le differenze, le possibilità e gli ostacoli per una cooperazione tra la Jugoslavia e le opzioni socialiste scandinave nelle circostanze politiche della Guerra fredda.

Parole chiave: comunisti jugoslavi, socialisti scandinavi, socialdemocrazia, socialismo, ideologia

INTRODUCTION[1]

By the end of 1940s, due to the confrontation with the USSR, Yugoslavia faced a specific and very complicated situation in the field of international politics (Bekić, 1988, 23–113; Petranović, 1988, 357–379; Dimić, 2001, 339–341). This caused a great number of problems not only at the political but also at the ideological level, primarily because in the case of Yugoslavia the ideology represented an important segment of its political legitimization. All circumstances indicated that the support was to be asked from the West (Bogetić, 2000; Jakovina, 2002; Laković, 2006). However, a question that appeared was how a country such as Yugoslavia, with the Stalinist ideological and political system, could cooperate with the Western countries and ask for political, material, and even military aid (Životić, 2015) without causing inevitable discreditation in the socialist world. There were various political options on the political spectrum of the Western countries, which were different in program or ideology. In the Western political life, there were various parties and movements, ranging from the far and moderate right, over the political center, to the far and moderate left. The difference was clearly reflected in the sphere of the political left, where there were pro-Soviet communist or socialist parties, as opposed to pro-democratic and anti-Soviet oriented social democratic and socialist parties, as well as Christian democrats (Van Kemseke, 2006, 17–30; Hamilton, 1989). In such a situation, the West European socialist and social democratic left represented an important bond for political cooperation with the West, as well as a solid ideological alternative. This was the reason why the importance of cooperation with the West European Left reflected in both political and ideological sphere. The visits of Western political representatives to Yugoslavia were crucial for introducing and connecting Yugoslav political leaders with the West. The Yugoslav side was consciously initiating such meets and visits since each political contact and connection in the West was a valuable support for the current policy. Activities in this direction began in 1950. The first contacts were established with the British Labour Party (Štrbac, 1988; Miletić, 2011; Režek, 2018), and later with almost all significant West European socialist and social democratic parties, the most prominent of which were French, Belgian, German, Spanish, as well as socialist parties of the Scandinavian countries.

The aim of this article is a short overview of the basic elements of cooperation between Yugoslav communists and socialist parties from the Scandinavian countries: Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Denmark. This topic is significant since there has not been much scientific research so far, except for rare works (Kullaa, 2012; Pirjevec, 2014; Miletić, 2016). In this case, the period between 1950 and 1953 was selected: from making the very first contacts with the representatives of West European socialist parties until Stalin's death – the period which represents a completed whole not only re-

1 The paper was created as part of the Institute for Recent History of Serbia project "Serbs and Serbia in the Yugoslav and international context: internal development and position in the European / world community (No. 47027)". The project is funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

garding the cooperation with the West European Left but also in the history of socialist Yugoslavia. When it comes to the cooperation with the Scandinavian countries, the first to be considered are Swedish and Norwegian socialists. The relationships with Finnish and Danish socialists were not particularly developed, but some unofficial contacts were certainly there.

THE BEGINNINGS OF COOPERATION WITH THE SWEDISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Political contacts with the Swedish Social Democratic Party (SAP) were established in the middle of 1951. On Yugoslav initiative, the first visit of SAP representatives to Yugoslavia was arranged in spring of the following year. For Swedish social democrats, Yugoslavia was completely unknown, but they were interested in the general picture of Yugoslavia, its foreign policy, and theoretical questions about the Yugoslav experience regarding the development of socialism and democracy (Tilton, 1990).

In accordance with the mutual agreement, Kaj Björk,[2] a famous Swedish socialist, visited Yugoslavia in April 1952. During his visit, he resided in several cities, visited certain economic and industrial facilities, and met a range of prominent people. On that occasion, a several-month-long polemic with Rodoljub Čolaković began on the pages of the Yugoslav and Swedish party press, which would raise a range of questions primarily in the field of ideology and political practice about which Yugoslav communists and Swedish social democrats openly disagreed. The basic question that was discussed, and at the same time the problem which was the main "point of misunderstanding", was the question of parliamentary democracy and the single-party system. The official topic of Čolaković–Björk polemic was "Socialism and Democracy". In the following months, the polemic revealed profound differences between Yugoslav communists and Swedish social democrats regarding the questions of democracy and the multi-party parliamentary system of the Western type, i.e. the possibility for it to be established in Yugoslavia.

On the Yugoslav side, Rodoljub Čolaković supported official attitudes which were politically current at the time. Thus, Čolaković supported the official attitude that the working class' fight for socialism was not developed according to a general pattern which would be shared by all countries, but that it took different forms (from case to case) which depended on historical and social conditions in each country. What was common for all, and what made it possible to establish the cooperation was the fight for the same objective, and that was socialism. Current democracy in the West had bourgeois character and its primary role was to preserve the capitalist order, serving it as the political upgrade. Thus, historical assignment of the working class was to

2 Kaj Ake Björk (1918–2014), a Swedish socialist politician, diplomat, and journalist. He was a secretary for the international affairs in the SAP (1947–1955), editor of social democratic newspapers *Tiden* and *Ny Tid*, a delegate in the upper chamber of the Swedish Parliament (1965–1973), the SAP representative in the Socialist International, and the Swedish ambassador to China.

surpass the frameworks of such democracy and replace it with socialist (proletarian) democracy. Such socialist democracy had exclusive character and was different from all other democracies known at the time as it gave the working class unreserved right to make decisions on surplus value and manage basic production resources. That right was the basic one which all other collective and individual rights stemmed from. Such type of democracy was currently being established in Yugoslavia, but, as Čolaković highlighted, in order to socialist democracy to function, a single-party system was not equally needed for all countries, but it varied from case to case. Čolaković wrote:

> *It is not possible to reply to this question by simple debating on democracy, but only by analyzing particular conditions of every country in which social democracy is being born. Those conditions are always nationally specific and dependent on the range of historical, internal and foreign political circumstances under which the working class comes to power and organizes its rule. It is those circumstances that affect whether the single-party system would be necessary for functioning of social democracy, or it would be possible to have more parties. Theoretically, both cases are possible, since for the functioning of social democracy, what is important is not whether there are one or more parties, but its class content, its class essence* […]. *Therefore, such democracy, if it is willing to obtain its legitimacy in history, must build such organs of the new rule which would enable faster, painless transition of the society from the jungle of the capitalist social relations to the classless society.*[3]

His conclusion was that democracy itself, regardless of its type, could not be a working class' ideal, but only a means of achieving the class objective: classless society. Čolaković particularly persisted in emphasizing the necessity of making the difference between the Soviet model of socialist relations and the "genuine" socialist democracy advocated by the Yugoslav leadership. It was of great importance in the context of the Yugoslav conflict with the USSR and due to the Yugoslav political need for apprehension and cooperation with the West European socialist left. In that sense, the Soviet social and political model was sharply criticized and presented in the extremely negative light. He wrote:

> *Many people in the world consider the reality and practice of that country as the realization of the dictatorship of proletariat and socialist democracy, even though it is basically incorrect. Long ago, socialist democracy in the USSR became a hollow phrase trying to conceal the power of an oligarchy which was, against the will of people, maintaining its power with the help of the enormous violence apparatus. Due to this fact, it is unduly to take arguments from the Soviet reality and practice against social democracy.*[4]

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3 AJ, 507/IX, 125/II-16, Attachments on "Socialism and Democracy", published in Sweden and Yugoslavia, according to the agreement of the Yugoslav and Swedish parties, 11. 2. 1953.

4 AJ, 507/IX, 125/II-16, Attachments on "Socialism and Democracy", published in Sweden and Yugoslavia, according to the agreement of the Yugoslav and Swedish parties, 11. 2. 1953.

On the Swedish side, Kaj Björk concluded that the two countries were complete antipodes in historical, cultural, economic, political, and ideological sense, so that there were significant differences in basic notions. Firstly, Björk emphasized that Swedish social democrats dismissed the rigid understanding and interpretation of Marxism, did not believe in Utopia and idealism, and from this follow a different understanding of democracy and socialism in relation to Yugoslav communists. Contrary to Yugoslav understanding of the proletarian socialist democracy, the Swedish highlighted the Welfare State, dismissed strong class fight and advocated achieving objectives in the direction of gradual changes and for improvements and mitigations rather than abolishing capitalism. Also, they advocate the way of political activities within multi-party parliamentary democracy. Therefore, Swedish socialists had a rigid attitude, closely related to the classic way of parliamentary democracy, as well as to the applied value system and the rules that should be obeyed. Thus, Björk said to Čolaković:

> *Yugoslav communists are correct when they highlight that the authority in the USSR is concentrated in the hands of a single bureaucratic caste that oppresses the rest of its nation.* […] *From our point of view, we draw the conclusion that a danger of oppression and tyranny is constant as long as one party has the monopoly. We do not deny the fact that the single-party rule could be justified by historical needs in some countries under special conditions. However, we believe that the single-party rule, at the end of the line, always involves the danger of suppressing the progressive forces* […]. *With the existence of several parties and the guarantee of individual rights, citizens may feel greater security and freedom in their everyday life, as the abuse of power by the authority could be corrected by oppositional parties' criticism.* […] *If it was possible to obtain the multi-party system that would satisfactorily work on solving social and economic problems, then it would also create the spirit of tolerance among opposite parties which, in turn, increased citizens' psychological welfare. Even if social and economic freedom is limited in such a system, political freedom is a positive advantage, and in our opinion, social and economic freedom cannot compensate for political freedom.*[5]

Kaj Björk took this opportunity to express his doubt in the possibility to guarantee and preserve social and economic freedom in the single-party system (even if it was the Yugoslav). From his standpoint, Björk expressed his doubt in not only Yugoslav political assertiveness but of any other communists, as well as the doubt in their political arrogance, based on which they claimed the right that it was only them who could interpret the needs of the working class and other citizens. In accordance with his estimation of single-party system, Björk wrote:

5 AJ, 507/IX, 125/II-16, Attachments on "Socialism and Democracy", published in Sweden and Yugoslavia, according to the agreement of the Yugoslav and Swedish parties, 11. 2. 1953.

> *It must be rather difficult to ameliorate abuse, and that is why it is difficult to grasp how workers can be confident in obtaining their rights, regardless of how the party in power may assert to represent their interests. We do not doubt that Yugoslav communists seriously persist in improving the welfare of their people and offering their workers a better position than in the USSR or capitalist countries. But, personal wills of the communist officials are not a sufficient guarantee that their estimation of workers' needs is the same as that of the workers themselves. It could be stated that workers themselves do not always understand their interests and that the proletariat avant-garde, i.e. the Communist Party must take care of that as well. However, we have always felt severe doubt when our communists claimed they understand workers' interests better than the workers themselves. Even though we believe that the Yugoslav communists are of greater quality than the piteous figures who currently lead Swedish Communist Party, we cannot be assured that their standpoints always represent the genuine interests of those who follow them.*[6]

Björk expressed his hopes for gradual development of Yugoslav society towards pluralistic democracy, emphasizing the fact that it was impossible for Swedish social democrats to regard any single-party system as democracy, however well-intentioned it might be regarding to development of socialism. But Swedish social democrats believed and strived towards socialism, so it was possible to find the mutual interest and cooperation with Yugoslavs in that sense. Björk also mentioned the fact that Yugoslavs showed greater flexibility and tolerance in their opinions, compared to Stalinists, which could have a positive effect on cooperation.

Through the Čolaković–Björk polemic, all differences in political and ideological attitudes and orientation can be perceived, not only between Yugoslav communists and Swedish social democrats, but also in regard with the entire West European Left. Each side had its own reason for debating and, generally, exchanging theoretical, practical and political experiences. The Swedish side took the opportunity to see, for that time and conditions, an "exotic" country, its system and authority politics. For them, Yugoslavia was a kind of an experimental area on which a "third" way of not only building socialism but also implementing the non-bloc politics was tested. For the Yugoslavs, contacts and experience exchange with the Swedish (as well as other western socialists) meant not only getting familiarized with the democratic method of building socialism, but also one of the possible ways of international affirmation of its way towards socialism. The Čolaković–Björk polemic is also significant as it encountered the response in the socialist press of the West European parties which had not been contacted so far, such as Danish and Dutch parties. However, ideological differences were too pertinent for the two sides to fully understand each other and to enhance their cooperation.

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6 AJ, 507/IX, 125/II-16, Attachments on "Socialism and Democracy", published in Sweden and Yugoslavia, according to the agreement of the Yugoslav and Swedish parties, 11. 2. 1953.

This significantly affected the official political cooperation of the two parties, as well as the Swedish and Yugoslav state cooperation, since the SAP leadership clearly expressed that, in principle, they cooperated only with parties that shared their primary attitude regarding political democracy, and which were members of the Socialist International. However, this did not mean that communication and "experience exchange", as well as unofficial ways of cooperation, did not exist; quite the contrary, contacts and connections were being improved more and more in the following months, and friendly relations between the two parties were cherished and highlighted. This is confirmed by the documents which indicate that the SAP cared about the mutual contacts and connections with Yugoslav communists, although such practice, out of "principled" reasons and ideological considerations for the members of the Socialist International should not be made official. The Yugoslav side, on the other hand, had a clear platform for its activities towards Scandinavian political circles, coordinated with its strong foreign policy orientation. Therefore, in regard to this orientation, in one letter to Stockholm and Helsinki, in the spring of 1951, clear guidelines are given for proceedings, which contained the following principles: the equality of small and large countries and the right of every nation to self-determination, condemnation of every form of aggression and violence in international relations, decrease of all forms of armament in proportion to a country's power, fight for the accomplishment of the UN Charter principles, aid for underdeveloped countries, development of international economic cooperation and cultural cooperation based on mutual respect.[7]

THE BEGINNINGS OF COOPERATION WITH NORWEGIAN, DANISH, AND FINNISH SOCIALISTS

Due to the lack of sources,[8] we are not able to present more precisely a general picture of the cooperation with Norwegian socialists, i.e. the Norwegian Labor Party (AP). However, from some limited sources, it can be stated that the cooperation with the AP was dynamic and that the activity on that field was present from 1951, when the first contacts were made. In the same year, the AP delegates resided in Yugoslavia, and in the following period, there were mutual visits of Yugoslav and Norwegian journalists, as well as the continuation of strengthening the cooperation. The peak of good relations with the AP was the invitation to Milovan Đilas, Vice President of the Republic and one of the leading party officials in Yugoslavia, sent by Norwegian socialists in 1953 to visit their country. The invitation was sent by the Secretary General of the AP, Haakon Lie.[9] Đilas' visit was formally supposed to be of private character, but the content of the visit

7 AJ, 507/IX, 125/V-18, Letter to Stockholm and Helsinki, 28. 5. 1951.

8 In the fund of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (AJ), which contains the most important and numerous documents on Yugoslav cooperation with the foreign political parties and movements, the documents regarding Yugoslav cooperation with the Norwegian socialists are missing.

9 Haakon Steen Lie (1905–2009), a Norwegian socialist politician. At the beginning of the 1920's, he joined the AP. During WWII, he was an active member of the Norwegian resistance movement. After the war, he was the General Secretary of the AP (1945–1969).

was rather ambitious. Lie even thought that it would be quite useful if Đilas visited also both Denmark and Sweden. On that occasion, it was arranged that Đilas' visit would last about seven days, and about twelve including Denmark and Sweden. During that period, Đilas would, besides meeting the AP leadership, representatives of the government, and labor organizations, have the opportunity to visit a range of industrial plants, facilities, and factories. All costs would be borne by the Scandinavian parties. The Secretary General of the AP used that opportunity to highlight the importance of the visit to Scandinavia as a whole. During the conversation, there was an attempt to relate that with potential change of Norwegian and Danish foreign policy course towards the Atlantic Pact, i.e. the rumors about the possible creation of "*the alliance of the Scandinavian countries based on neutrality*", which was denied by Lie as the possible political future of Norway, as well as other Scandinavian countries. Besides the need for mutual rapprochement of Norwegian socialists and Yugoslav communists, political benefits of these visits were particularly highlighted in a telegram addressed from Oslo to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in August 1953. Having received the recommendations from the AP leadership, the Yugoslav Embassy "*heartily recommends to comrade Đilas*" to accept the invitation, "*even more so Norwegian Labor Party is now in the Executive of the Socialist International*." The visit to the Scandinavian countries was supposed to be realized in February 1954.[10] However, it would never be realized due to the removal from power of Milovan Đilas in January 1954, which did not significantly affect further friendly relations with the AP, although there was a mild and temporary standstill (Miletić, 2016).

Norwegian socialists undoubtedly had affinities towards Yugoslav communists and their reformative efforts in the direction of society democratization. What they particularly appreciated was the Yugoslav radical separation from the USSR and its politics. However, just like the Swedish, Norwegian socialists misunderstood the Yugoslav "democratism". Namely, mutual contacts of Swedish socialists and Yugoslav communists revealed a huge gap in the apprehension of not only democracy as the political system, but also the relation of democracy and current political priorities. Thus, a Yugoslav diplomat described this in his "political report" from Norway by the end of March 1952 as following:

> *Affinities towards our country are undoubtedly great, both in the Labor Party and other parties, especially in the former, because 'we develop democratism along with socialism'. But I could express those affinities in the following way: they are more affected by a trivial incident which they consider an attack to democratic freedom than they are delighted by a great matter that we do consider a step towards further development of socialism. When Cominformers have recently been disclosed in 'Borba', they were more affected by the fact that they were arrested*

10 DAMSP, PA, 1953, Norway, f. 64, no. 415178, The record of the conversation of councilor P. Popović with the general secretary of the Norwegian Labor Party Haakon Lie, 22. 9. 1953; DAMSP, PA, 1953, Norway, f. 64, no. 417481, Annual report of the SFRY embassy in Oslo, 24. 12. 1953.

('since everyone has right to advocate their personal opinion') than they were delighted they were disclosed.[11]

The basis for the initiative of Yugoslav communists for the contacts and cooperation with socialist parties in the Scandinavian countries was the political interest in the geostrategic positions of Scandinavia in the Cold War conditions and Yugoslav relationship with the USSR. In such a situation, defense politics and military strategy of the Scandinavian countries were monitored minutely. Since the beginning of the 1950s, Scandinavian governments had been associating their strategy with the Western security system and the newly formed Atlantic Treaty (NATO), opposing the USSR and Eastern bloc countries. Belgrade found such tendencies rather interesting, so the diplomacy services and intelligence channels were actively included in monitoring all those activities. The important role of Norway was particularly highlighted due to its specific geostrategic location in the north of Europe. Thus, in a report from Oslo in October 1951, it was clearly concluded that the strategy of the Atlantic Treaty was

to put the entire territory of Norway, especially its northern part, under control. […] *The territory of Norway, especially its northern part, must be defended and not liberated. Besides, the northern part of Norway is considered the last defense line of the North Atlantic.*[12]

The interests in those matters were intense which was obvious in the efforts of Yugoslav diplomatic representatives in Norway to obtain as much information. In that sense, at the initiative of the Yugoslav diplomatic representative, a meeting was arranged with General Dahl, the Commander-in-Chief of so-called Northern Autonomous Norwegian Army, which had a special assignment to defend the northern borders from the potential raids from the Soviets.[13] During this period, in the strategic and defensive sense, the Yugoslav side was particularly interested in so-called Scandinavian Defensive Bloc and its politics towards the USSR.[14] Annual political reports from Norway for the years of 1951 and 1952, in which the current state of the country, political strategy, and plans of the Norwegian government in regard of foreign affairs and cooperation with the Atlantic Treaty were reconsidered also testify about the Yugoslav close monitoring of the situation.[15]

The politics of the Scandinavian countries was monitored minutely in the context of their geostrategic politics towards the West and the USSR, as well as Yugoslavia. The entire picture of the current Cold War constellation of power was established, and, in relation to that, the politics of Yugoslavia. The complexity and sensitivity of the current politics

11 AJ, 507/IX, 92/IV-25, Political report, 21. 3. 1952.
12 AJ, 507/IX, 92/IV-10, Report on Soviet-Norwegian relations, 20. 10. 1952.
13 AJ, 507/IX, 92/IV-14, Report on conversation with General Dahl, 16. 12. 1951.
14 AJ, 507/IX, 92/IV-23, Questions about the Scandinavian defense block, 30. 1. 1952.
15 AJ, 507/IX, 92/IV-20, Political reports from Norway for 1951; AJ, 507/IX, 92/IV-25, Political report, 21. 3. 1952.

of Yugoslavia, squeezed between the two blocs, required such interests and analyses of Yugoslav diplomatic services. A detailed report of the Yugoslav diplomatic service from November 1952 revealed the relationships of the Scandinavian countries (particularly Norway and Sweden) with the Atlantic Treaty and situations in these countries. Thus, the report mentions the words of one of the Norwegian Socialist Party representatives and, at the same time, the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway, who explained the current situation to the Yugoslav diplomat in the following way:

> *We have joined the Atlantic Treaty because we are confident that only decisiveness and competence for defense can refrain the Soviets from further infiltration in Europe. We have long debated that issue and reached the conclusion that all possibilities should be predicted as soon as possible. We have adjusted our politics according to our defense plans, considering that the USSR is our neighbor. We share 178 km of our frontier with Russia, and, in addition, we are obliged to respect the neutrality of Spitzbergen, i.e. the demilitarization of the archipelago. We let the Americans know we cannot give our territory for military and navy bases. However, we have undertaken everything so that we could welcome our allies in case of war.*[16]

When it comes to general matters related to defense strategies, the Norwegian representative also stated that, "*for the time being*", there was no chance to station the US troops on the Norwegian territory, "*except for the regular commissions predicted by the Atlantic Treaty*" and that, in case of a raid, the Norwegians would have to leave the northern part of the territory but not strategically significant points, such as the Spitzbergen Archipelago which on no account should fall into the Soviet hands. He also highlighted the fact that Norwegian defense maneuvers in the North Atlantic were in accordance with "*the general defense plans of the West*", i.e. that they knew the Americans had set their entire strategic defense plan along the geographic line from North Africa, over Spain and England to Scandinavia. Thus, the Norwegian representative concluded that the Norwegians were under the impression that the Americans would not let the Soviets "*install themselves on Norwegian coasts*", as it would jeopardize them from the north and hinder their operations in the Mediterranean Sea.

> *Therefore, we must be watchful and do everything to let the Soviets know we want good relationships. The Swedish military neutrality is of great help for us, and we deem that, in case of greater tension or war itself, we could play an important role, especially if the Soviets could not transfer the greater part of their forces on the positions in Scandinavia.*[17]

16 AJ, 507/IX, 92/IV-28, Norway and Sweden on the problem of defense of the West, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, 20. 11. 1952.

17 AJ, 507/IX, 92/IV-28, Norway and Sweden on the problem of defense of the West, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, 20. 11. 1952.

It could be seen from the mentioned examples what replies from the Scandinavian political representatives were of great interest for the Yugoslav diplomats. The Scandinavian military and defense bloc had a significant role in the Western politics towards not only the USSR but for Yugoslavia as well. Thus, during his conversation with the Yugoslav diplomat, one of the Norwegian politicians stated that Norway supported Yugoslavia as it needed it in this political situation, regardless of its internal organization. He said:

> *At this moment, we need Yugoslavia, even though we know it is a police state as well. It is very convenient for us in our fight against the Russians. Without Yugoslavia, we would be in a very difficult situation due to the power of communist parties in France and Italy. Our diplomacy is aware that the Marshall Plan has not violated the power and dynamics of communism, but it enabled the integration of the powers that are by nature anti-communist, and which could unconsciously act in favor of the Soviets, as it is the case in France.*[18]

The first indications of the cooperation with Danish Social Democratic Party appeared in the second half of 1952; until then, the contacts were rather superficial and at the formal level. As stated in a report, by the end of 1953, contacts with Danish socialists were quite rare and accidental. Thus, the Vice President of the Danish Social Democratic Party spent several days in Yugoslavia in 1951, but only in the by going, in passing, and as a member of the Danish inter parliamentary delegation. However, one may get an impression from the documents that the Yugoslavs noticed this demerit, and from the mid 1952 were becoming interested in closer relations with Danish socialists, especially when their representatives indicated that they supported Yugoslavia in the conflict with Italy regarding Trieste. Thus, the Vice President of the Danish Social Democratic Party, Alsing Andersen, in a conversation with the diplomatic representative of Yugoslavia in September 1952, suggested to improve the cooperation, even to send a powerful delegation led by the president of the Danish Social Democratic Party to Yugoslavia the following year. In October 1952, a delegation of Yugoslav journalists spoke to the President of the Danish Social Democratic Party, Hans Hedtoft. On that occasion, Hedtoft was interested in the issue of democracy development in Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav type of single-party democracy.[19]

As with the Danish Social Democratic Party, the similar situation was with the Finnish Social Democratic Party. Until the end of 1953, no official contacts were made, although there were frequent informal encounters between Yugoslav representatives and Finnish social democrats. Those encounters brought various ideas on the both sides. For instance, by the end of 1953, there was an informal agreement on the visit of

18 AJ, 507/IX, 92/IV-28, Norway and Sweden on the problem of defense of the West, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, 20. 11. 1952.

19 AJ, 507/IX, 23/II-2, Note on the conversation of the Yugoslav journalist delegation with the President of the Social Democratic Party of Denmark Hans Hedtoft, 25. 10. 1952.

the Finnish Social Democratic Party delegation to Yugoslavia, but the proposal was postponed indefinitely. Negotiations lasted for more than two years and until the end of 1953, no final agreement on the visit was reached. Finland's indecisiveness and restraint regarding the establishment of a more serious and intensive cooperation was interpreted by the Yugoslav side as political opportunism from Finnish side (territorial closeness and danger from the USSR).[20] However, from the Finnish side, the restraint towards Yugoslavia was justified by "the communist dictatorship" which was established in Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, mutual fondness was not questioned.[21]

CONCLUSION

The cooperation and contacts with the Scandinavian socialists as well as other officials from the West European Left mainly had a form of formal mutual introduction and experience exchange at the party level, without transparent interference of the official state politics. There were multiple types of contacts, ranging from official visits of party delegations and individuals to informal connections and agreements. As presented on the example of a public interparty debate known as the Čolaković–Björk polemic, the differences between the Yugoslav communists and Swedish socialists were considerable and to a great extent insurmountable, which was the case with Norwegian, Danish, and Finnish socialist parties as well. The differences were reflected primarily in the field of ideology and apprehension of social and political organization, and they stemmed from the different nature of the two parties and different political systems they operated in. Basically, Scandinavian socialists did not accept the single-party system in Yugoslavia, which they considered undemocratic, and advocated a multi-party parliamentary democracy. Contrary to them, the Yugoslav communists believed that the Western democracy had a bourgeois character and served to preserve the capitalist system. In that sense, there was almost no way for a closer cooperation. Nevertheless, the Scandinavian socialists considered that Yugoslav communists showed more flexibility and tolerance than the Soviet Stalinists, and that the cooperation with them was possible. However, a far greater degree of mutual understanding and potential for cooperation was indicated in the spheres of realpolitik, i.e. in the matters of foreign affairs and relations with the USSR, far from abstract ideological criteria and attitudes. At that point, the cooperation was possible and was regarded with mutual affinities. Certainly, this side of cooperation was far more significant and was related to interstate relations and geostrategic interests. Yugoslavs were primarily interested in the policy of the Scandinavian governments in relation to NATO, Western defense policy, the deployment of military forces towards the USSR, and military-strategic plans in this regard. This is illustrated by the analysis of the diplomatic documents which contain a great degree of interest of the Yugoslav side for the matters of political and strategic-defense nature that were in the background of official party contacts and communications.

20 For more on Finland–Yugoslavia relations, see: Kullaa, 2012.

21 AJ, 507/IX, 26/II-4, Material on the arrival of the delegation of the Finnish Social Democratic Party to Yugoslavia.

ODNOSI MED JUGOSLOVANSKIMI KOMUNISTI IN SKANDINAVSKIMI SOCIALISTI V LUČI JUGOSLOVANSKIH VIROV (1950–1953)

Aleksandar V. MILETIĆ
Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, Trg Nikole Pašića 11, 11000 Beograd, Srbija
e-mail: samiletic82@gmail.com

POVZETEK

Začetek petdesetih let Jugoslaviji ni ponujal razlogov za optimizem na področju zunanje politike. Stisnjena med dvema blokoma in v nezavidljivem položaju socialistične države s prekinjenimi odnosi z nedavno vzornico in zaščitnico Sovjetsko zvezo, se je morala po pomoč obrniti na Zahod. V teh razmerah je skušala navezati stike z ideološko bližjimi partnerji – z zahodnimi socialističnimi in socialdemokratskimi strankami in gibanji, med katerimi so imeli posebno mesto skandinavski socialisti, najprej švedski in norveški ter zatem danski in finski. Jugoslovansko sodelovanje s švedskimi in norveškimi socialisti je potekalo na ravni medsebojnega spoznavanja in izmenjave izkušenj. V ta namen so bili organizirani uradni obiski delegacij strank in javne razprave. Ideološke razlike med njimi so bile precejšnje in niso niti ponujale niti obljubljale nadaljnjega sodelovanja, toliko več skupnega pa so imeli jugoslovanskimi komunisti in skandinavski socialisti na področju zunanje politike, zlasti glede odnosa do Sovjetske zveze. Bistvo in ozadje njihovega sodelovanja so bili torej predvsem skupni geostrateški interesi v razmerah hladne vojne.

Ključne besede: jugoslovanski komunisti, skandinavski socialisti, socialdemokracija, socializem, ideologija

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THE INTERNATIONAL PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEM OF SELF-MANAGING SOCIALISM: THE CASE OF *PRAXIS*

Una BLAGOJEVIĆ
Central European University, Department of History, Nador u. 9, H-1051 Budapest, Hungary
e-mail: Blagojevic_Una@phd.ceu.edu

ABSTRACT

The article focuses on self-managing socialism as an alternative to both capitalism and Soviet-type socialism. It looks at the discussions of self-management as a laboratory of intellectual ideas. As a case study it takes the Yugoslav philosophical journal Praxis *and its associated Summer School on Korčula as spaces both virtual and real, which gathered intellectuals and acted as a point of mediation through which the actors from diverse intellectual and political contexts could think in an intertwined manner about the prospects of socialism. The method of this essay is intellectual history, with a political--historical contextualization of the discussions through 1967, that is leading up to the events and discussions of 1968, which represented both the high hopes and the failures of socialism. The aim is to look at different approaches to self-managing socialism and to highlight the difficulties of developing it conceptually.*

Keywords: self-management, Praxis, Yugoslavia, intellectuals, Marxist Humanism

IL PROBLEMA FILOSOFICO INTERNAZIONALE DEL SOCIALISMO AUTOGESTITO: IL CASO *PRAXIS*

SINTESI

Il saggio si incentra sul socialismo autogestito quale alternativa sia al capitalismo sia al socialismo di stampo sovietico, esaminando le discussioni attinenti all'autogestione come laboratorio di idee intellettuali. Come caso di studio prende in esame il giornale filosofico jugoslavo Praxis *e la relativa scuola estiva sull'isola di Korčula come spazi sia virtuali sia reali che riunivano intellettuali e fungevano da punto di mediazione attraverso il quale gli attori provenienti da diversi contesti intellettuali e politici potevano contemplare in maniera interattiva le prospettive per il socialismo. Il metodo impiegato nel saggio è quello della storia intellettuale con la contestualizzazione storico-politica delle discussioni fino al 1967, ossia quelle che portarono agli eventi e le discussioni del 1968, che allo stesso tempo rappresentavano le grandi speranze e i fallimenti del socialismo. L'obiettivo è quello di esaminare i diversi approcci al socialismo autogestito ed evidenziare le difficoltà del suo sviluppo concettuale.*

Parole chiave: autogestione, Praxis, Jugoslavia, intellettuali, umanesimo marxista

INTRODUCTION

"*The 150th anniversary of Marx's birthday coincided with the time of revolutionary movements in Vietnam, Czechoslovakia, and France*" (Stojanović, 1969, 190). This was the opening line of Svetozar Stojanović's essay entitled *The Possibilities of Socialist Revolution Today*, published in number 1–2 of the 1969 volume of the Yugoslav philosophical journal *Praxis.* This issue, entitled *Marx and Revolution*, represents a collection of the proceedings of the Korčula Summer School in 1968. Since activists around the world used the language of Marx in their demands while referring to a wide diversity of circumstances and contexts, Stojanović believed that "*the revolutionary forces once again confirmed*" the relevance of Marxist socialist thought at the end of the 1960s. To show that he was not alone in this belief, Stojanović referred to Jean-Paul Sartre's journal *Les Temps Modernes*, which had announced in its May-June edition that: "*In the future we know that socialist revolution is not impossible in one country of Western Europe, and maybe even two or three!*" (Stojanović, 1969, 190).

Yet it has often been argued that the aftermath of the events of 1968 – notably the defeat of the Prague Spring in August of that year – caused widespread shock in left-wing circles around Europe (Van der Linden, 2007, 179). In the words of Polish dissident Adam Michnik, the march of Warsaw Pact troops into Prague over the night of 21 August marked the "*death of revisionism*" (Tismaneanu, 2011, 2). The failure of the revolutionary potential of 1968 represented the end of certain illusions about the nature and limits of Marxism in the European East and West alike. In an interview in 1978, Ágnes Heller, a Hungarian philosopher of the Budapest School around Georg Lukács, stated the following:

> *1968 was a year of optimism. The prospect of Europe unified under democratic socialism seemed a real possibility at the time. We anticipated that within such an international context, the economic reforms then being launched in Hungary would initiate a social transformation of the system. However, as I have already said, our optimism proved to be based on illusions, as the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia finally showed. August 1968 marked the end of our reformist illusions and aspirations* (Heller, 1978, 160).

While keeping in mind the trauma induced by the stifling of the Prague Spring, this essay looks into the period prior to the invasion by Soviet-led troops into Czechoslovakia. As a symbolic year, 1968 simultaneously represented both the hope of a reformed socialism as well as its failure. Hence this paper reflects on the period prior to 1968 in which the achievement of an alternative, reform-type socialism – that is, self-managing socialism – was seen as plausible. In order to do so, this paper contextualizes the international Marxist (or generally leftist) discussions held at the Korčula Summer School on the Yugoslav Adriatic island of the same name, where intellectuals from around the world gathered to exchange their ideas and opinions. This study frames the discussions of three presenters at the 1967 summer school, within the contemporaneous, wider context of mid-century

European integration as well as the long-term project of the internationalization of socialism. I will suggest that the thrust of their discussions about self-managing socialism prior to 1968 was – although filled with disagreements, conceptual inconsistencies, and misunderstandings – seen in Marxist terms as the only viable way out of the seeming contradictions of modern life.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Origins of *Praxis*

In the early 1960s, a group of professors affiliated with the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zagreb (and later also the University of Belgrade) envisioned a new philosophical journal, as well as an associated summer school to take place on the Adriatic island of Korčula (Kangrga, 2002, 31).[1] The idea behind the journal and the school emerged from discussions at an international philosophical symposium held in Dubrovnik in 1963, entitled *Progress and Culture*, organized by Zagreb-based philosophers Milan Kangrga and Gajo Petrović. The symposium acted as a way to gather well-known Marxist intellectuals and philosophers from across Europe, including, among others, the already world-known German sociologist and philosopher Erich Fromm, French Marxist philosopher Henri Lefebvre, and Romanian-born French Marxist theorist Lucien Goldmann (Kangrga, 2002, 212). This practice – to overcome the East-West binary of the Cold War through an international exchange of Marxist ideas – set the stage for the emergence of *Praxis* and the format of the Korčula Summer School.

Both the summer school and the journal (published in a domestic Serbo-Croatian edition as well as a multilingual international edition) acted as spaces of exchange, gathering renowned representatives of contemporaneous trends in global Marxism, including philosophers and sociologists, but also non-Marxists, and those simply interested in the theoretical dialogue between "East" and "West" (cf. Stefanov, 2014). On the pages of *Praxis*, philosophers critical of what they viewed as the Stalinist type of bureaucratic socialism could debate on common topics from their desks in Paris, Prague, Budapest, Belgrade, New York, and beyond. At the Korčula Summer School, Yugoslav intellectuals and students could meet face-to-face with their colleagues from the West and East and exchange ideas, books, and glasses of Pošip wine, indigenous to the island of Korčula (Kangrga, 2002, 212).

The philosophical orientation of the journal *Praxis* was Marxist Humanism or, more broadly, critical Marxism. Since definitions of Marxist Humanism and critical Marxism deserve their own papers, I will just mention few of their main characteristics. The political language of Marxist Humanism was unapologetic in its critique of Stalinism. From the position of Marxist Humanists, Stalinism in the USSR completely stifled the autonomy of local branches of social organization (Milić, 1965, 119). What seemed to be the worst mistake of

1 The founding members of the journal were Zagreb-based philosophers Milan Kangrga, Gajo Petrović, Rudi Supek, Branko Bošnjak, Danko Grlić, and Predrag Vranicki.

Stalinism was the failure to realize that the political revolution was not an end in itself. That is, socialist societies ought to create permanent and revolutionizing social relations which would lead toward a constant, continuous liberation of man (Vranicki, 1965, 251). These conclusions were primarily drawn from their readings of the "young" Karl Marx – that is, the early works of Marx leading through the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*. In addition, the *Praxis* philosophers held the common theoretical position that there was no epistemic break in Marx's philosophy. Instead of a discontinuity between a "*'young Marx', preoccupied with Hegel, humanism, and in particular with human alienation, and a 'mature Marx', whose concern was to elaborate a strictly scientific view of social life*," they maintained that there is a continuity that ties all of Marx's work together (Sher, 1977, 32). As Ivan Svitak, a Czechoslovak Marxist Humanist explained, there was less of an exclusive focus on the "young" Marx for those around *Praxis*, than a conviction that "*limiting the Marxist philosophy of man to the works of the young Marx would misrepresent Marx's humanism*" (Svitak, 1965, 20). Thus, the "scientific" socialism Marx had developed in his later work was seen as emerging precisely from his own humanist preoccupations. To Marxist Humanists, self-managing socialism was seen as the intended result of Marx's system rather than Stalinist bureaucracy.

This sentiment was made clear by Predrag Vranicki, *Praxis* philosopher at the University of Zagreb:

> *This conception* [of self-management]*, as we have seen, emerges from the specifically Marxian interpretation of history: man, the alienation of man in modern society, and the overcoming of that alienation and of the entire bourgeois society by socialist development. The conception of workers' and social self-government is the logical and necessary consequence of conceiving man as a historical being of practice* (Horvat, 1975, 464).

Thus, the editors of *Praxis* were convinced that an authentic and humanist socialism – whose development was hindered by the dogmatic, Stalinist interpretation of Marxism – was viable in the future. In the article *Čemu Praxis?* [*Why Praxis?*] they acknowledged that their contemporaneous world was "*still a world of economic exploitations, national inequality, political unfreedom, spiritual emptiness, a world of pauperism, hunger, hatred, war, and fear*" (Petrović, 1964, 2). For that reason, their intellectual engagement with Marxism and a persistent critical approach to the contemporary world would shed light on the roots of these problems and ultimately help to solve them. One way in which these problems expressed themselves was through the combined problems of European integration and the internationalization of socialism.

Praxis and European Integration: Rudi Supek at the European Seminars

In order to grasp the general dynamics of the intellectuals' discussions about self-management, it is useful to frame these issues in the more general context of European integration and the internationalization of socialism that began in the mid-1960s.

Members of the *Praxis* circle, including other foreign contributors to the journal and participants at Korčula, participated in seminars and discussions imagined and organized as platforms to think about the unity of the European continent. More specifically, the Institute of European Community for University Studies (which was an organ of the European Economic Community) conducted a series of seminars in university centers that were dedicated to the problems of European integration in political, economic, and cultural aspects.[2] These seminars invited presenters with different ideological views: for instance, the sub-theme *The Opening of European Marxism* at the first summit in Munich was introduced by Lucio Lombardo-Radice, professor at the Sapienza University in Rome as well as a leading member of the Italian Communist Party. The seminar in Grenoble, which took place from 25–28 January 1967, entitled *The Presence of Europe in the World*, contained a particularly relevant sub-theme *The Future of the European Community and Eastern Europe*, discussed by intellectuals, politicians, and economists, who came from Poland, Czechoslovakia, France, and Yugoslavia (Supek, 1967a, 240). Fittingly, the seminars attracted large numbers of students, packing the events with visitors.

The same year, Rudi Supek – a Croatian sociologist and one of the founders of *Praxis* – received another letter of invitation to attend the European Seminar that was to take place at the University of Cambridge in April 1967. The letter expressed the goal of the organizers:

> *Dear Sir, the Committee of Student European Associations of Great Britain has much pleasure in announcing its Seventh Annual European Seminar. The programme will be of great significance to all thinking people interested in the future of Europe. Broadly speaking, the Seminar will cover the economic and social life of Europe and one aim of the conference will be the reduction of tension in Europe through improved mutual understanding.*[3]

Summarizing the most important points from the various European seminars he participated in, Supek noted that the question of European integration was not only a practical political question (including economic and technological issues), "*but it is first and foremost a question of a spiritual unity*" (Supek, 1967b, 381). He argued that it was self-explanatory that the socialist idea is an intrinsic part of common European values (Supek, 1967b, 381). Hence, he highlighted that the integration of Europe would not presuppose moving away from socialist systems – in other words, the joining of Europe must not in any way "*disturb the normal processes of social progress of some countries*" (Supek, 1967b, 381). The exchange of opinion between intellectuals, as well as between public and political individuals stemming from different ideological back-

2 By the time Supek wrote the article *Yugoslavs at the European seminar*, there were three seminars, first in Great Britain in Brighton, second in Munich (West Germany) and third in Grenoble (France). Supek and his colleague Ljubomir Tadić attended the last two.

3 HR-HDA-1780, Rudi Supek Correspondence, April 1967.

grounds, showed a common concern about European integration. As such, these discussions prompted further awareness about the number of dominating problems, issues, and conceptions "*which Europeans ought to reckon with in order to create European unity*" (Supek, 1967a, 241).

Rudi Supek expressed that, in 1967, the conditions for dialogue between intellectuals of socialist and nonsocialist countries were generally perceived "*as never being better*" (Supek, 1967b, 373). The reason for this, Supek explained, was that on the one hand socialist countries began to reject dogmatic Marxism-Leninism after Stalin's death in 1953. On the other, socialist thought gained presence and strength in Western countries (Supek, 1967b, 373). Disregarding the ideological differences between capitalist and socialist countries, Supek maintained that "*there is an emergence of one, still not clearly defined, feeling of European solidarity which is getting stronger and stronger*" (Supek, 1967b, 378).

Supek's contemporaneous interpretation, as well as the example of these seminars, gives us one way to historicize the fact that so many intellectuals were able to discuss the same topic, even if they came from different intellectual positions and social contexts. It is fair to argue that only a global and international dialogue was seen as being able to help find the solutions for the contradictions of Marxism as well as socialism in practice. Contacts were sought out, and dialogue seemed to be the necessary solution to these problems. Umberto Cerroni, an Italian jurist who wrote extensively on Marxist thought as well as legal matters in the USSR, wrote a review of *Praxis* expressing the need and importance for such a journal "*in the moment in which socialism needs an integral mobilization of its intellectual sources*" (Cerroni, 1967, 435).[4] While the intellectual thrusts behind developing and perfecting self-managing socialism found their most critical and dynamic forum in *Praxis* during the latter half of the 1960s, the Korčula Summer School was the physical place to test these ideas among other intellectuals. The 1967 Summer School is a case in point when it comes to developing refined ideas of self-managing socialism.

KORČULA 1967 AND APPROACHES TO SELF-MANAGEMENT

While the intellectuals publishing in the journal *Praxis* and participating at the Korčula Summer School shared a common point of departure – that is, a critical, undogmatic Marxism – this essay suggests that the particular analyses and understandings of various concepts diverged between these intellectuals once they were related to real and concrete practices. The possibilities of the implementation of an idea like self-management is a case in point. Clearly, encounters at the Korčula Summer School in 1967 were not without misunderstandings and disagreements. These dif-

4 The text was originally published in *Rinascita, Settimanale fondato da Palmiro Togliatti*, 31 March 1967. *Rinascita* was an Italian political and cultural magazine founded by leader of the Italian Communist Party, Palmiro Togliatti, and consequently main the media outlet of his party.

ferences in thought and conceptual plurality were understood as a need to elaborate, clarify, and supply Marxist philosophy with other concepts. The dialogue among the Left in 1967 – "*which encompassed Marxists from capitalist and socialist countries*" – disclosed controversies, yet these misunderstandings showed that the dialogue was becoming more international, intensive, and also more critical. At least, this is how Predrag Vranicki saw it. Between 14–16 September 1967, Vranicki attended a colloquium on the topic *The Critique of Political Economy Today*, organized at the Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe-Universität in Frankfurt am Main. The meeting made it clear that some Marxists from socialist countries were "*more concerned with perfecting the already existing conditions*," thereby acting and thinking only "*within étatistic and technocratic frameworks*," while more radical attendees promoted anti-étatistic conceptions that they conceived as possible only through the realization of self-management (Vranicki, 1968, 212–213). To Vranicki, it was obvious that those speaking of self-management recognized the importance of Yugoslav experiences and Yugoslav conceptions of workers' self-management.

A month earlier at the Korčula Summer School, the intellectuals engaged with the similar topics. The overarching theme was *Creativity and Reification* discussed through the following sub-themes: 1) *freedom and planning*; 2) *bureaucracy, technocracy and individual freedoms*; 3) *the workers' movement and self-management*; and 4) *cultural creation and social organizations*. Participants who presented their papers included Ágnes Heller from Budapest, Robert Tucker from Princeton, Serge Mallet from Paris, and others. Specifically, I engage with the presentations given by Svetozar Stojanović, Ernest Mandel, and Arnold Künzli. Their presentations evaluated the notion of self-management from different perspectives. At the same time, their presentations provide insight into the controversial and difficult aspects of Marxist thought with which they constantly dealt – to name one, the importance of "the material" in a philosophical system. All three presenters assumed that their role as intellectuals provided an orientation to deal critically with real-life problems. Each argued that their theoretical observations are not abstract reflections, but rather that they express the "*conclusions of the real possibilities and tendencies*" of self-management in their respective societies (Stojanović, 1967, 685). It could be argued that the majority of participants at Korčula were convinced that their critical and humanist thought ought to be concrete rather than abstract, that is, self-reflexive toward the existing historical moment (Sutlić, 1967, 612). Their positions fall nicely within the very aim of the journal *Praxis* as well as the summer school, which adds to the intellectuals' understanding of their own role in contributing to the solutions of the contradictions of the modern world.

Svetozar Stojanović explicated that real socialism cannot exist without social self-management and social property (Stojanović, 1967, 680). One could argue that this was a shared idea among these intellectuals gathered at Korčula. Stojanović and other critical Marxists, mainly from the East, shared the opinion that a system based on state property and state management of production as well as social life, cannot rightly call itself "socialist" (Stojanović, 1967, 680).

Instead, it is an étatist kind of socialism or a system that Stojanović called the "modern class system" differing little from capitalism. Still in 1967, Stojanović remarked that it was an "*unfortunate case that many Marxists, even after Stalin's death, are still convinced that the communist and socialist society can genuinely be built and developed only around an all-powerful state*" (Stojanović, 1967, 681). In contrast to such a conception of an unprecedented role of the state, Stojanović was convinced that self-management was the only kind of socialism that could bring about a genuine transition from capitalism to communism through socialism. Not all participants would agree with this idea, as they would require Stojanović to qualify his idea of what constituted self-management. The questions often raised could be formulated as: What should the economic background be in order for self-management to actually function? Can self-management be implemented in scarce societies? Does the material background of a country dictate the successful implementation of self-management (Stojanović, 1967)?

These types of questions emerged in one case from Rudi Supek's review of a book by French ecologist and political theorist André Gorz entitled *Difficult Socialism*, published in 1966. Supek emphasized Gorz's argument that self-management – referring to the Yugoslav case – cannot exist in resource-scarce societies, since distribution cannot be democratic and so the intervention of a planned economy is unavoidable (Supek, 1967c, 839). Gorz argued that in circumstances of low technological development and resource scarcity, which still defined Yugoslavia, self-management is liable to failure. Gorz's rationale was that workers would soon become aware that their material needs could not be satisfied, and thus they would either stay active in self-management – to some extent becoming technocrats – or they would lose interest in self-management and become passive in its development (Supek, 1967c, 838).

While aware of Gorz's analysis, Stojanović had fifteen years of experience in Yugoslav socialism, which showed to him that the practice of self-management was no longer a matter of theoretical speculation. By 1967, self-managing socialism had rather become something concrete and practicable, with certain techniques and particular constraints. From his perspective, Yugoslavia could rightly serve as a laboratory where one might critically analyze the aspects of this practice, and so extract theoretical generalizations. Stojanović found it problematic that George Lichtheim, the German-born intellectual historian of Marxism, argued that the idea of workers' self-management was a "syndicalist utopia." Stojanović added in his presentation that Lichtheim never mentioned the Yugoslav experience (Stojanović, 1967, 682).

The main contentions of Stojanović's presentation centered on the demystification of two misconceptions about self-management. The first opposed self-management to étatism, while the second equated self-management with the decentralization of the state. To him, both have detrimental consequences. It is evasive to simply contrast self-management to étatism, because one cannot then delineate between larger and smaller scales of self-management. Stojanović adopted the position of the *Praxis* philosophers' general critique of the functioning of self-management in Yugoslavia: that is, the practice of self-management disclosed the tendency that some self-managing

groups engage in exploitation and so threaten the potential of Yugoslav social unity. The potential result of this is a disintegrated and atomized working class that begins to show egoism, particularism, and concurrency. Linked to that is the second misunderstanding: self-management as complete decentralization of the state (Stojanović, 1967, 683–684). Stojanović addressed this issue from his Yugoslav perspective, implicitly referring to Edvard Kardelj's conception of the withering away of the state as based on economic self-management understood as political decentralization. In Stojanović's view, such a definition of self-management ultimately leads to the fragmentation of society. Therefore, it is naïve to believe that only decentralization can lead from economic étatism to a self-managing integration of society (Stojanović, 1967, 683–684). Hence the economy in a socialist society cannot solely be based on the market: it ought to be coordinated, directed, and planned. Socialist society, Stojanović explained, differs both from the alienated state as well as the anarchistic market. Or put differently, the socialist community is a wider and more important concept for self-managing socialism. In this view, self-management is a necessary but not sufficient condition of such a community (Stojanović, 1967b, 688).

And while implicitly answering the criticisms concerning material interests, Stojanović argued that one could not speak of the path into socialist community from the perspective of utopian communisms, and so the transition into socialism cannot be thought of without relying on interests, including the material ones (Stojanović, 1967, 688). However, as will become clear, the acknowledgement of material interests would be found problematic by other participants.

The second speaker at the Korčula Summer School, Ernest Mandel, presented a paper entitled *Freedom and Planning in Capitalism and Socialism*. Mandel's argument was that socialism needs economic planning because that is its main condition for achieving personal freedom for all individuals. Economic planning in socialism gives freedom to individuals "*to such a degree that was never possible in the most bourgeois society*" (Mandel, 1967a, 697). That is, one could add here that to Mandel, planning in socialism was important. He defines planning in the most general sense – that is, the conscious combination and allocation of economic supplies with an aim to achieve some predetermined goals (Mandel, 1967a, 693). A few months before this presentation, Mandel published an essay entitled *Yugoslav Economic Theory*, where he argued for central planning. There Mandel maintained that "*in practice Yugoslav self-management is a combination of workers' self-management, extensive use of market mechanisms and tight political monopoly of power by the Communist League of Yugoslavia*" (Mandel, 1967b, 40). This combination, to Mandel, has its positive side – greater workers' initiative, but also a negative side – increasing social inequality, increasing abdication of central planning. In the presentation at Korčula, Mandel, rethought the antithesis between the notions of "freedom" and "planning" (Mandel, 1967b, 693). Mandel confirmed that freedom and planning are not necessarily in opposition to one another (cf. Samary, 1997).[5]

5 Catherine Samary, a participant of 1968 in Paris and a lecturer at the Université Paris-Dauphine, disuses in detail the theoretical positions of Ernst Mandel as well the theory of state capitalism.

It should be emphasized that unlike Stojanović, Mandel did not differentiate between a "type" or "kind" of socialism he had in mind while discussing the matter of planning and freedom. In his presentation, Mandel did not use the notion of "étatism". Instead he simply compares socialism with capitalism through the notions of freedom and planning. Coming from the Western context, Mandel focused on the meaning of planning in capitalist countries, arguing that planning and individual freedom cannot be reconciled in that context. Simply put, the reforms taken in Western countries do not give workers any veto rights over questions that relate to the organization of the production process. Neo-capitalist planning for the reform of the structure of companies is characterized by the fact that these reforms do not give workers any right of veto in questions of the organization of the production process (Mandel, 1967a, 696).

While reflecting on the contemporaneous situation in the West, Mandel argued that the classic Marxist critique of bourgeois democracies was "consciously or unconsciously" accepted by public opinion in the West (Mandel, 1967a, 696). His argument was buttressed by a brief conceptual history. The usage of the word "ghetto", Mandel explained, was historically understood as an institution which, during the Middle Ages as well as the Nazi period, lawfully and administratively coerced Jewish minorities within a small bounded space within a city (Mandel, 1967a, 696). In 1967, Mandel argued, "*today we use the word to describe the living conditions of American Blacks, which are formally and legally free to live wherever they please*" (Mandel, 1967a, 696). Mandel here did not speak about the idea of freedom in the abstract but ties it to a concrete example. His specific understanding of freedom is crucial here.

Mandel maintained that the high material living standard of the workers in industrialized capitalist countries (which he referred to as imperialist) barely made the workers "free" (Mandel, 1967a, 695). Freedom, to Mandel, cannot be linked with an advanced living standard based on material goods. The worker in the West is not "free" despite that the fact that capitalist countries gave him basic social insurance – although Mandel conceded that social welfare is an important step toward the achievement of freedom. However, this is not enough, since a higher standard of living in the political conditions of the West only brought about, in his words, "*new forms of alienation and unfreedom*" (Mandel, 1967a, 696). Mandel, unlike Stojanović, insisted that Marx's idea of "the kingdom of freedom" can only be developed and reached outside of the sphere of material production – although, he contended, advances in material production do provide a basis for this kingdom of freedom (Mandel, 1967a, 706).

In contrast to Mandel, Arnold Künzli, while endorsing the very idea of self-managing socialism, raised the following issue. In his presentation entitled *Self-Management in the Ghetto*, Künzli asked: "*Can one speak of a genuine workers' movement in the parliamentary-democratic part of the so-called West?*" The answer to this question – perhaps the decisive question for the future of self-management – depends greatly on the manner in which we define the workers' movement, and what it constitutes (Künzli, 1968, 4).

To answer this question, Künzli historicized the notion of the workers' movement and so argued that in its classical political conception, in the West at least,

such a movement does not exist. Namely, two aspects of workers' movement were non-existent in the then-contemporaneous West: firstly, the dominated and exploited proletariat plotting the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist relations; secondly, the unavoidable class solidarity and international solidarity of the workers (Künzli, 1968, 4–5).

From a position that he describes as "radical realism," Künzli argued that the values which characterize Western parliamentary democracies – such as individual liberties – are cherished by the working class. And so Künzli argued that the fundamentals of Marxist philosophy, that predicted the sharpening of the class struggle, failed in that sense. He quoted Herbert Marcuse who had "*many years ago already assessed the possibility that in the foreseeable future of today's Communist Party outside of the Soviet realm – and maybe even within – could become the inheritors of the traditional social-democratic parties*" (Künzli, 1968, 5).[6] In addition, the notion of alienation in the West had long been jettisoned by real, concrete historical developments. That is, the more productive the worker, the more he could purchase and consume – not less. Künzli's conclusion was that the alienation of labor in capitalist economies had lost its radical, Marxian character. Künzli claimed:

> *Whoever in the so-called West today philosophizes about the notion of alienation* […] *that person has a distorted consciousness. The worker is not in any existential crisis: he might even get himself a car, and a vacation on the Adriatic. He is secure from anything and everything. The state and his employer give him guarantees for his pension and other benefits* (Künzli, 1968, 9).

Similarly to Stojanović and Mandel, Künzli's argument is not a mere philosophical and abstract rumination, but is supported by the most immediate example – that is, the example of the chemical workers in Basel who were the best-paid workers in Switzerland and beyond. Yet the study, as Künzli argued, showed that despite a five--working-day law, the workers still worked on Saturdays as taxi drivers to make extra income, leaving Sunday as their only day off (Künzli, 1968, 11).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

These above presentations, although I take them as paradigmatic examples of the difficulty that existed in the context of the intellectual exchanges, are just an aspect of a more complex discussion of self-management that took place in the journal *Praxis* and the Korčula Summer School. Nevertheless, it is possible to suggest that, while they aspired to develop a universal theory of self-management, these intellectuals approached the problematics of self-management from their own particular perspectives. More precisely, participants often spoke from their own social contexts, using the phrases such as "the Western world," the "Eastern wor-

6 Künzli quoted Herbert Marcuse's *Die Gesellschaftslehre des sowjetischen Marxismus*.

ld," and the "Yugoslav experience," thereby emphasizing the embedded character of their conceptual thinking. An illustrative figure of this multiplicity of interpretations is Dušan Pirjevec, former Slovene partisan and Marxist philosopher, who opened his presentation at the summer school in 1967 with the words: "*I speak from my own personal experience*" (Pirjevec, 1968, 82). He explicitly pointed at the difference between the role of intellectuals in Western Europe and America, and in Eastern Europe and Yugoslavia. This position was representative of the various approaches to the topic of self-management, since these were often dependent upon the participants' presuppositions. It is precisely this plurality of interpretations that informed their analysis of the "functioning" or "malfunctioning" of self-management as both ideal and practice.

In addition to their intellectual backgrounds, it is fair to say that the participants' respective experiences of living and working in different cultural, political, and economic contexts were decisive factors that colored their conceptual thinking about the problems of socialism in general. By ignoring the importance of context, Marxist political thinking would appear as an isolated entity, unchanging across all time and space. Supek's correspondence demonstrates how this supposed universality is constantly contested – not only within Europe, but also beyond. A telling example is a letter written by Harold W. Cruse – an academic, author of *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (1967), and member of the Communist Party USA – who, while expressing that the discussions at the Korčula Summer School made him arrive at new conclusions concerning the radical movement in the United States, nevertheless added that:

> *I am afraid that Europeans have not an adequate enough background on the subject of blacks in the U.S.* […] *From the American point of view, I believe that much of European Marxism is still wedded to many fixed categories which are rather irrelevant in the United States.*[7]

Clearly, the questions that emerge from the problem of race as an important category in the thinking of African-American radicals was not part of the primary conceptual universe of the European socialist movement. When informing Supek about the subject of his paper to be presented at the upcoming Korčula Summer School, Cruse wrote in 1973 that the topic would focus on "*a number of pertinent issues which are not so well understood by the European socialist movement, e.g. the* [compound] *problem of race, class, and socialism*."[8]

At the same time, as this overall essay made clear, these thinkers aspired to universal discussions. Furthermore, the intellectuals at Korčula aspired to the idea, which was captured by Henri Lefebvre in 1966, that Marxist thought is the starting point for the understanding of their contemporaneous world. At the same time, the

7 HR-HDA-1780, Rudi Supek Correspondence, November 1971.
8 HR-HDA-1780, Rudi Supek Correspondence, 1973.

basic concepts of Marxist thought had to be "*elaborated, refined, and complemented by other concepts where necessary*" (Lefebvre, 1982, 341–342). The intellectuals at Korčula saw precisely this task as an important and fruitful element in their historical present. Tihomir Zvonko's statement given during the final general discussion at the Korčula Summer School in 1967 verbalized the central issue during this session, and it pointed toward the perceived need to clarify the concepts, similarly expressed by Lefebvre:

> *We all speak about freedom, but what do we mean by freedom? What we first have to do is clear up and clarify these concepts, because we all, in some way, spoke about the path into the future as the path into freedom. But we do not even know what freedom is. And, consequently, that means that we do not really know what we want. Thus, our aims and goals are put into question, that is, our status. And from there we cannot step any step ahead* (Zvonko, 1968, 92).

Yet, in the context prior to the crises of 1968, this critical plurality of voices was deemed positive, and pointed toward a need to work out new theoretical conceptions that could solve the issues that emerged during the practice of self-managing socialism in Yugoslavia. Socialism, and specifically self-managing socialism as an alternative to Western parliamentary democracies and Soviet type of socialism, was seen as possible. The questions of the meaning of socialism itself were, however, not yet debated. Nenad Stefanov suggests dividing the history of the journal and the summer school in three different phases: the first, from 1963–1968, was characterized by "humanist Marxism" from a Yugoslav perspective. However, 1968 showed the "limits of a humanist socialism" and consequently a more skeptical outlook emerged concerning the possibility of transforming socialism. Thus, the very meaning of socialism started to dominate the summer school's discussions until the school's closure in 1974 (Stefanov, 2013, 119).

Svetozar Stojanović argued that prior to the Prague Spring, Yugoslavia had a "monopoly" over the socialist avant-garde in Europe. That was showed by the intense dialogues and interest of foreign intellectuals who were coming to Korčula (Stojanović, 1969, 195). Yet the prospect of reform socialism was stopped by the Soviet-led invasion of the country in August 1968, and not because of their wish for anti-socialist national self-determination. Rather, the internal revolutionary changes occurring in Czechoslovakia were perceived as the gravest danger to bureaucratic socialism and Soviet domination of the region.

These events and experiments resulted in an acceleration of differentiation within the communist movement. Stojanović claimed:

> *Obviously today under the same name – communist – there are hidden very different, even diametrically opposed parties. Some of them do not even deserve to be called communist in Marx's sense of the word. The adequate name for them is étatist parties* (Stojanović, 1969, 195).

The critique of self-managing socialism in Yugoslavia was based on the problem of idealizing commodity production as well as market relations which were understood as allowing the recognition of monetary value to become the main value of society. As Mandel warned in 1967, "*the purist of individual enrichment becomes the universal ideal of all members of the community*," and as a consequence this triggers "*competition in all fields of social behavior, at the expense of solidarity and cooperation*" (Mandel, 1967b, 49). Yet, while the *Praxis* philosophers were convinced that a real socialism can only be of a self-managing type, after 1968 they became more critical towards the contradictions in Yugoslav society and the "*new risks and threats connected with the newly emerging nationalism in Yugoslav society*" (Stefanov, 2013, 119).

After the trauma of 1968, the divergences that were latently present in the discussions at Korčula became more visible and polarized – the meaning of socialism itself became more strongly divergent. In the words of János Kis, György Bence, and György Márkus in the post-1968 period, critical Marxists from the "East" and "West" still expressed themselves in the terminology of socialism. Yet, they had:

> [D]*iametrically opposed ideas toward the realization of socialism. That is, one side insisted that socialism cannot be realized without adherence to the principle of tolerance and the continuous operation of the institutions of representative democracy, while the other unmasked tolerance as a form of manipulative repression and demonstrated that representative democracy is merely the mask of what in fact are anti-democratic mechanisms. One side stressed the need for differentiated pay scales, while the other demanded that wage categories be done away with* (Kis, 1972).[9]

Gerson S. Sher has pointed out that in the period after 1968, the attendance of Marxists from other countries of Eastern Europe at Korčula "*dropped sharply, but this was more than compensated for by increased participation of Yugoslavs, Western Europeans, and Americans, including increasing numbers of students*" (Sher, 1977, 55). Yet what also seemed to have changed was not only the decreased attendance of intellectuals from Eastern Europe, but also the very nature of the discussion at the Korčula Summer School. After the collapse of the Paris protests, the appeasement the appeasement of student demands in Yugoslavia, the stark political failures in Poland, and ultimately the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, revolutionary prospects across Europe dramatically diminished. From the perspective of international Marxist Humanism, intellectual positions became more rigid and thus not open to the negotiation they had been before.

9 Originally published in 1972. Thanks to Prof. János Kis for providing me with his English translation, which I have reproduced here.

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MEDNARODNI FILOZOFSKI PROBLEM SAMOUPRAVNEGA SOCIALIZMA: PRIMER *PRAXIS*

Una BLAGOJEVIĆ
Central European University, Department of History, Nador u. 9, H-1051 Budapest, Madžarska
e-mail: Blagojevic_Una@phd.ceu.edu

POVZETEK

Članek se osredotoča na samoupravni socializem kot alternativo tako kapitalizmu kot sovjetskemu tipu socializma na način, da sledi razpravam o samoupravljanju kot laboratoriju intelektualnih zamisli. Za študijo primera jemlje jugoslovansko filozofsko revijo Praxis *in z njo povezano korčulsko poletno šolo kot mesto virtualnega in resničnega, ki je združevalo intelektualce in delovalo kot posredniška točka, prek katere so lahko akterji iz različnih intelektualnih in političnih okolij izmenjevali razmišljanja o prihodnosti socializma. Uporabljena metoda je intelektualna zgodovina, ki upošteva politično-zgodovinsko kontekstualizacijo diskusij iz leta 1967 kot povoda razprav in dogodkov leta 1968, ki so pomenili hkrati vrhunec upanja in poraz socializma. Namen pričujoče analize je predstaviti različne pristope h konceptu samoupravnega socializma in osvetliti težave, povezane z njegovim konceptualnim razvojem. Iz analize izhaja, da so obravnavani intelektualci skušali razviti univerzalno teorijo samoupravljanja, a so se k temu fenomenu približevali predvsem na podlagi njihovih lastnih kulturnih, ekonomskih in socialnih kontekstov, tako da so fraze kot so »zahodni svet«, »vzhodni svet« ali »jugoslovanska izkušnja« še vedno ostale vgrajene v njihovo konceptualno razmišljanje. Ugotovimo lahko celo, da je pluralnost interpretacij bistveno vplivala na njihovo analizo (ne)delovanja samoupravljanja tako v smislu idealne konstrukcije kot njegove praktične izvedbe. Na filozofsko opredeljevanje, kaj je in kaj ni socializem, kar je sicer stopilo v ospredje šele v kasnejšem obdobju korčulske šole, pa so ključno vplivali poraz reformnega socializma na Češkoslovaškem in tudi kontradikcije v razvoju jugoslovanskega socializma.*

Ključne besede: samoupravljanje, Praxis, Jugoslavija, intelektualci, marksistični humanizem

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THE POLITICS AND AESTHETICS OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM IN YUGOSLAV MODERNITY. THE CASE OF YUGOSLAV MODERNISM AND ITS IMPACT: SOME EXAMPLES OF BREAKTHROUGH ART IN THE CONTEXT OF SELF-MANAGEMENT

Darko ŠTRAJN
Educational Research Institute, Gerbičeva 62, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
e-mail: darko.strajn@guest.arnes.si

ABSTRACT

One of the first Yugoslav films, which reflected the emerging urban middle class and the values of a cosmopolitan part of the younger generation in 1960s, was Boštjan Hladnik's film Peščeni grad *(*A Sand Castle*, 1962). The film reminds one of Godard's film* Pierrot le fou *(1965), which was actually shot three years later than Hladnik's "Sand Castle". Hladnik's Milena vanishes on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea at the end of the film and so does Godard's Ferdinand. The film is taken as a starting point of a presentation of Yugoslav history differently than in the post-communist reductionist approaches.*

Keywords: film, socialism, Yugoslavia, New Left, West, art

LA POLITICA E L'ESTETICA DEL SOCIALISMO DEMOCRATICO NELLA MODERNITÀ JUGOSLAVA. IL CASO DEL MODERNISMO JUGOSLAVO E IL SUO IMPATTO: ALCUNI ESEMPI DI ARTE INNOVATIVA NEL CONTESTO DELL'AUTOGESTIONE

SINTESI

Uno dei primi film jugoslavi a riflettere l'emergente classe media urbana e i valori della parte cosmopolita delle generazioni più giovani negli anni '60 fu il Peščeni grad *(*Castello di sabbia*, 1962) di Boštjan Hladnik. Il film richiama una delle pellicole di Jean-Luc Godard,* Pierrot le Fou *(*Il bandito delle 11*, 1965), che in realtà fu prodotta tre anni dopo il Castello di Hladnik. Alla fine del film, la Milena di Hladnik scompare sulle coste del Mediterraneo proprio come succede con il Ferdinand di Godard. Il film funge da spunto per una presentazione della storia jugoslava in modo alternativo agli approcci post-comunisti riduzionisti.*

Parole chiave: film, socialismo, Jugoslavia, Nuova Sinistra, Occidente, arte

INTRODUCTION[1]

The Gulag is not the only story to be told about Eastern Europe.
(Parvulescu, 2009, 78).

Nobody disagrees with the statement that the system of socialism[2] actually existed and that it made a difference, concerning the continuity of the variety of social and political organisations and orders, unfortunately prevalently in the economically and culturally "backward" countries. However, as the time distance from the socialist epoch is increasing, many research problems arise. Especially touching upon history, some related social sciences and humanities cannot be left out of the diverse equations of determining times and spaces. It is open to discussion what kind of freedom and social changes were brought to the so-called former communist societies due to the fall of the Berlin wall. However, this event immediately functioned to signify the discourses of a construction of differences between the past and the future. But then just after less than two decades following the symbolic episodes of fallen walls, cut barbed wires and the waving of flags with the cut out presumably hated emblems, and after many "liberations" subsequent to the so called end of communism, a widespread disappointment with democracy and the neoliberal destruction of welfare state on the both sides of the torn iron curtain became overwhelming. The apparition of a revolution against socialism did not produce anything, but a very weak nostalgia for the "good old times". It should be more accurately stated that we have to deal now with social amnesia. As much as superficial journalism and an upsurge of anti-communist rhetoric obviously instigated a large scale waning of historical consciousness, the social sciences contributed their own not very big, but substantial share to this amnesia. Especially political sciences and sociology, which were eager all the time after the proclaimed end of

1 I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for reminding me about the need to mention the context of the two cases, which I interpret in some detail. I realised that without some additional explanations and the mentioning of facts and different views the whole article would not be comprehensible enough for international readership.

2 Even in the academic sphere the terminology of naming "one party systems" is not generally accepted and clear. Judging from my own experiences, especially American peer reviewers tend to advise authors to use the term "communism" instead "socialism". In the terminology of journals such as, for instance, *Soviet Studies, East European Politics and Societies, Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Problems of Post-Communism* etc., the usage of both terms is somewhat vague, but the term "communism" is prevailing, when authors mean former "one party systems" and/or their ideology. European journals, among which *New Left Review* is the most prominent example, distinguish between both terms in various modalities. It seems that this terminological problem points to a much wider conceptual puzzle, which represent a concern in the field of history and in other social sciences. I am insisting on the appropriateness of the term of "socialism" since "former communist regimes" generally called themselves "socialist", even though in their doctrines they envisioned "communism" as a new phase of socialism. The terminology is further knotty due to the fact that the ruling parties named themselves "communist". Anyway, in the space of former Yugoslavia the usage of both terms in scholarly discourses is quite clearly accepted. For instance, in all my bibliographical references in this paper that originate in this space, the authors are maintaining the usage, which I adhere to as well.

communism to promote democracy and market economy, developed rather reductionist definitions of the socialist societies.

Many definitions of the epoch of socialism were, and still are, rooted in the fundamentally misunderstood Lyotard's idea of the "end of grand narratives" (Lyotard, 1979). Let me take just one example of reductionism, in which the author adhered to the seemingly generally accepted definition of socialism:

> *According to ideological discourse, the socialist society was the 'one class' society – a society of ruling working class and few remainders of 'the defeated classes'. Such ideology relegated socialist society to a purely transitional state – as the working class suppressed the remaining fractions of the capitalist class it would abolish itself, introducing the communist society* (Hafner-Fink, 1999, 173).

This description of "ideology" is based on the assumption that socialist states were "one dimensional" with all such attributes as the suppression of civil and political rights, the frequent violations of human rights, etc. In this example we are not dealing with an intentionally misguided condensed description of socialism and not even with a statement without a trace of truth in it. The problem is that this description takes for granted the *retrospective construction of the state of affairs under socialism*. On the other hand, the misperceptions in this example – which happen to be quite common in many similar approaches in countless papers and books – simply overlook the evidence, which indicates that the political slogans and celebratory declamations had not been "taken seriously" and that they functioned primarily in the framework of "cynical distance", as Slavoj Žižek (2008, 225) pointed out in some of his essays already before the termination of Yugoslavia.

Of course, taken at face value, such retrospective determinations, such as the one cited above, cannot simply just be denied. In the post-communist narratives, they operate as the denotations of the past that through the power of emphasis on "dictatorial" aspects becomes reduced to primarily one dimension, which concerns the structure of power. In any case, socialist societies were – especially after a series of so-called political thaws – gradually becoming more complex than it seems when one looks upon them mainly through the optics of power and its mechanisms of domination. What should be taken into account here is the coinciding of the demise of modernity with the period of last years of socialism, which means that the socialist societies were participating in modernist transformations. Thus, they shared roughly similar problems as the Western welfare states. Even politics, labelled as dictatorial, was involved in the constant renegotiations of the terms of co-existence between various social actors within society throughout the relevant period of European modernity. This especially holds true in the case of Yugoslavia after the first troublesome decade or so after the end of the World War II.

In view of the Agnes Heller's (1990) reflections on modernity as the epoch, when the *sense of the present* ruled, it can be ascertained that the broader cultural, intellectual and social spheres under socialism were far from totally closed for artistic, scientific and, indeed, social inventions. In the 1950s, it seemed that while still lagging behind the

West economically and technologically, at least some socialist states advanced and even surpassed the West in the field of education, which became apparent and even quite exaggerated in the West after Sputnik's sensational success in 1957. All these aspects must be remembered as we are confronted with a ceaseless anti-communist rhetoric and in many cases unintended obliviousness even in the social sciences of post-modernity.

> *Modernity looks at the future, hopes for it, plans for it, constructs it, and builds it. Post-modernity has lost or thrown away any sense of time direction. The past as well as the future and the present become 'virtual realities', or simultaneously combinable elements, as in post-modern architecture* (Therborn, 1995, 4–5).

Considering such distinctions, we should realise that a new de-construction or at least re-evaluation of the past becomes necessary.

> *Modernity ends when words like progress, advance, development, emancipation, liberation, growth, accumulation, enlightenment, embetterment, avant-garde, lose their attraction and their function as guides to social action* (Therborn, 1995, 4).

The "post-modern post-communism" in the framework of neoliberalism and – as Alain Badiou (2009, 72) would have it – in the context of *generic fascism,* does not only impair modernist impulses, but it even immobilises the potentials for any social action. What we understand nowadays through the notion of neoliberalism is in fact not only a process of restoration of the pre-socialist order, but, above all, a subtle and indirect suppression of the multiple emancipatory initiatives, which erupted in the event of May 1968. As much as some modernist categories may appear obsolete, a re-enactment of the meaning of such notions as emancipation, enlightenment and liberation seems at least theoretically imminent. These categories lost their significance as their historical foundations were left to oblivion, denunciation, misidentification and censure. My aim with this paper is not so ambitious as to do the complex work of regaining an array of seemingly lost meanings of the notions of the past. I am only taking a few examples in order to signal that such an effort could be argued for on the bases of evident modernist heritage of socialism. Yugoslavia, as a milieu of a quite singular type of socialism, is in this respect important and interesting.

THE COEXISTENCE OF POLITICAL POWER AND CULTURE

The impressive view from Kalemegdan, Belgrade's ancient fortress, comprises not only the confluence of two mighty rivers (Sava and Danube), but also the sight of two interesting buildings, which are situated on the peninsula between the rivers. One can admire a quite radically modernist edifice of the Museum of Contemporary Art with its triple façade, which is characterised by the geometrically meticulous triangularity of its concrete and glass elements. The building was designed by architects Ivan Antić and Ivanka Raspopović and it was finished in the year 1965. Right behind this aesthetically at-



Fig. 1: View of the Museum of Contemporary Art and Mihailo Janković's skyscraper in Belgrade (Wikimedia Commons).

tractive assembly is the gleaming glazed skyscraper towering over 100 meters high which was designed by Mihailo Janković, the author of a number of other prominent buildings in Belgrade at the time when the city had been the Capital of Yugoslavia. In the Belgrade daily jargon, the tower is still referred to as the "CK building" (meaning Central Committee of the League of Communists) although its function was changed to a business centre in 2009 after the completing of the reconstruction of the building, which was damaged by the NATO bombings of 1999. This unique view could be taken as an allegory of the coexistences within the Yugoslav singular type of socialism, in which political power and culture in the context of the development of the model of the self-management system cohabited in a sometimes strained, but overall tolerant relationship. The fact that both buildings were designed in the modernist manner – and not, for instance, in a "monumental" Soviet style – speaks for itself.

"*Socialist realism was definitely abandoned through Krleža's paper presentation at the Congress of the Association of Writers in Ljubljana in 1952*" (Denegri, 2016, 13). In the aftermath of the World War II, Yugoslav Communists indeed embraced the Soviet

"model" of socialist revolution, which meant industrialisation, agrarian reform and the collectivisation of farms, nationalisation of private property and at the level of "superstructure", among other changes, also an appropriation of the doctrine of Socialist Realism in artistic creation. However, this cultural element of the implementation of indeed huge social changes, was not a central concern of the Party compared to its focus on the big problems of social changes and international placement of the country, but multiple interactions between both spheres were noticeable. The ensuing clash with Stalin already in 1948 contributed to the demise of the doctrine of Socialist Realism. Hence, an attempt by the Yugoslav "fine artists' association" to exhibit the products of the Yugoslav brand of Socialist Realism did not make any lasting impression:

> *The 1949 show did not fully succeed in its goal of showcasing representative Socialist Realist works or teaching the masses. Many of the artworks did not conform to Socialist Realist tenets, displaying instead a broad variety of aesthetic and stylistic forms* (Videkanić, 2016, 4).

Therefore, the modernist approaches in many different manifestations in all varieties and genres of art blossomed in this period, which is also decisively marked by the introduction of workers' self-management. "*As an adequate phenomenon in such a model of socialism in politics and in the arts, a specific Yugoslav 'socialist modernism' establishes itself*" (Denegri, 2016, 31). Ješa Denegri also claims that in this mutual recognition between politics and art, a majority of artists did not oppose the regime. The activity of the group EXAT-51 in early 1950s, whose members (painters and architects) Protić, Čelić, Picelj, Kristl, Rihter, Bernardi and others did not meet many obstacles in their work. They introduced the elements of styles of *Bauhaus* and *De Stijl* along with their own experiments. The same holds true for a number of different artistic groupings and movements as *Enformel*, which was a movement that introduced abstract painting. In the same category, one finds also the group *Gorgona* – actually artists in Zagreb gathered around the journal of the same name – and the *New Tendencies*, which Denegri (2016, 52) labels as the "last avant-garde". Still, the coexistence between art and politics was not smooth throughout the period of Yugoslav socialism. Denegri makes a point that Tito's "attack" in the official daily *Borba* in 1963 on abstract art, which in his view should not have been supported by public funds, remains inexplicable. In his view, this ideological condemnation, which did not have serious consequences, should be ascribed to "oscillations" of Yugoslav politics between East and West (Denegri, 2016, 113). Without much further ado, I can say that modernism in all its various manifestations in the Yugoslav mainly urban cultural environments developed in a very similar manner as in the West in spite of some scandals, political pressures and some cases of a bit stronger public reactions, concerning the "artistic value" of the sophisticated or provocative works of art.

While discussing all this (art) history, one should keep in mind that Yugoslavia was the federation, which was composed of different cultural entities – called "nations" in the Yugoslav system. Each Yugoslav republic to a large extent developed its own culture

and in each of them there were specific conflicts between the political establishment and different artistic and other intellectual actors. Tomaž Brejc, for example, labelled the Slovenian version of modernism "Dark Modernism". Commenting on Marij Pregelj's paintings, Brejc (1991, 181) pointed out that "*The ethics of* [his] *message is not ideological; in fact, it is determined by the existential imagination of the artist*." Indeed, existentialism as philosophy and as the attitude in artistic creation was widely appropriated by the Slovenian artists in the most varieties of art. Writers and poets like Lojze Kovačič, Vitomil Zupan, Dominik Smole, Peter Božič, Ciril Zlobec, Kajetan Kovič, Dane Zajc and others clearly adopted existentialism.

> *The term 'critical generation', which marks Zajc's belonging to the circle of Perspektive, acquires a new dimension: it is about the allegorical-symbolic and allusive strategies of the critique of the political domination and the deconstruction of its ideologemes* (Juvan, 2000, 238).

Each of these artistic personalities took their specific stand and some of them came close to a type of intellectual position such as those known in the Eastern bloc countries as "dissident". However, any detailed analysis would demonstrate that the controversies and especially a level of harshness of the governmental reactions in the Soviet block and in non-aligned Yugoslavia were incomparable, with the exception of the "pre-modern" political showdown with Stalinism. Many real and would-be Stalinists happened to be confined in the severe prison on the island *Goli Otok* in the Adriatic see.

The notion of "generation" was often used in discourses on modernist art in Yugoslavia. Roughly, Yugoslav modernism consisted of at least three generations. The first was rooted in quite significant pre-war artistic phenomena. The second generation – including the "critical generation" in Slovenia – was represented by artists born not long before the war. The final manifestations of the most radical modernism were the work of artists of the baby-boom post-war generation. As it were, different controversies in many instances transcended just the relations between political authorities and artists as they were interwoven with disagreements of the conceptual nature between generations as well with some inevitable personal rivalries, which sometimes have been translated into a given ideological vernacular. Of course, educational and cultural institutions and their growth played a very noteworthy role in the process of materialisation of the conditions for artistic work. National and international festivals had a big role in the growth of, for example, modernist theatre. On the other hand, each of the artistic trends had different logic and dynamics in different fields of artistic activity. Cinema barely existed as an art prior to World War II and, consequently, the modernist film enters the central stage quite a bit later than other arts.

I chose to give a closer look at just two examples among the few that I mentioned above. These two examples amongst the multiplicity of artistic phenomena of the modernist period in the socialist Yugoslavia, happen to be somewhat a little bit more representative than others for my aim in this paper. Hladnik's cinema, without any disso-

nance between film theoreticians, was supposed to be the inauguration of the cinematic modernism in Slovenia and at the same time in the entire Yugoslavia. The other example, the group *OHO*, represents a breakthrough within the modernist framework in view of the new generation and in view of their specific conceptualism with an ambivalent social and political message.

THE *SAND CASTLE*

Pertinent comparisons between the Western and Eastern production of films, following the phenomenon of the French *Nouvelle Vague*, especially demonstrate that in the intellectual and artistic spheres division between "two worlds" did not mirror the political and so-called ideological divisions in post-war Europe. Student movements and various trends in the domain of the mass and youth culture of 1960s further invalidate the projections to the past in the form of the cliché of "free world vs. dictatorship".

> […] *'Eastern Europe' triggers visions of repressive politics, fundamentally different from the 'gentle coercion' that is thought to characterize disciplining mechanisms in the capitalist West. Concerned with the everyday workings of power within conditions of 'normalcy', the films challenge these widespread Cold War assumptions, which, ironically, have also been uncritically adopted by intellectual elites of a post-1989, capitalism-bound Eastern Europe* (Parvulescu, 2009, 78).

Contemporary film studies are currently still gradually working on the un-written "programme" of an analysis and deconstruction of the aesthetic form along with social and political contexts of the film productions in the period of cold war, which happened to be at the same time the age of the so-called author's cinema. The Eastern part of the narrative about the last film avant-garde in known history is still being added to the whole historical picture of the European cinema of 1960s and 1970s.[3] To make my point about this in this paper I am only taking the example of one Slovenian film: Boštjan Hladnik's *Sand Castle* (*Peščeni grad* – 1962). This particular film can be perceived as a part of evidence that the times of socialism – in Yugoslavia and to various degrees elsewhere in the Eastern and Central Europe – were not just a "black hole in history". On the contrary, some periods in Yugoslavia were artistically and intellectually highly productive.

> *As the period of post-war prosperity on both sides of the iron curtain opened a space for a new self-definition of younger generations, a great number of the European films*

3 More extensively about this in: Štrajn, 2008, where I pointed to many common traits in "Eastern" and "Western" cinema of the time. The same holds true also for almost all other forms of art as well as for philosophy and most of other humanities in the epoch of late modernism, but it is less true for empirically oriented social sciences.

> *of the period addressed the position of individual in a society in a manner, which uncovered the illusory stability of the world* (Štrajn, 2008, 45).

Hladnik's film *Sand Castle* was one of the first Yugoslav films, which reflected the emerging urban middle class, new values and the life style of a cosmopolitan part of the post-war generation. The film was shot at the time of fully constituted self-management of the already quite visible Yugoslav "experiment" of so-called market socialism. Roughly a decade and a half after Tito's clash with Stalin, Yugoslavia made a significant difference within the whole Eastern bloc countries. It should be stressed that the multi-ethnic federal country on its way to building its own model of socialism was not formally a member of any Soviet controlled Eastern alliances.

> *The 1960s paved the emancipatory opening of SFR Yugoslavia, arising from the establishment of the significant differences between the Yugoslav self-governing, non-aligned socialism and Soviet bureaucratic socialism* (Šuvaković, 2012, 288).

The part and parcel of this differentiating were such moves by the Yugoslav government in the 1960s such as the opening of the borders and enabling free travel for its citizens as well as accelerating a development of tourism; another important step away from the Soviet model was the economic reform, which introduced market mechanisms and instigated consumer spending. A little-known fact is that the reform of the compulsory education and secondary schooling took place as well. In the context of all these openings, art became a space of quite free experimenting and uninhibited creativity. Although the Yugoslav Communist Party in its "Stalinist phase" tried to follow the politics of socialist realism in all areas of art, already in the 1950s the artists were showing little enthusiasm for the "style" of praising and decorating the achievements of the socialist revolution. A rather singular Yugoslav film genre called *partisan film* did in fact follow some patterns of the Soviet cinema, but even within this genre, films increasingly tackled the existential and psychological aspects of the war theme. When the Yugoslav republics started to organise their own film productions, which were based on the logic of self-management that gained specific forms in the sectors outside of factories and retail activities, the aesthetics of the films followed suit. The "basic law on film" in 1956 enabled relatively independent film productions (Škrabalo, 1998; Stankovič, 2012). Hence, apart from partisan films, realism in Yugoslav films resembled much more the Italian neo-realism than the socialist realism. This trait evolved much further in the specific Yugoslav New Wave cinema, which developed various forms of social criticism and, ultimately in 1970s, it experienced a degree of censorship due to its supposedly "too pessimistic" visualising of social reality. The label "crni film" (black cinema) was invented in the corridors of power, but it entered the cannon of Yugoslav cinema of the time.

In spite of a relatively small production, Slovenian cinema took the lead early on in introducing the modernist current in the Yugoslav cultural and social context. Boštjan Hladnik (1929–2006), who was additionally trained for film directing in Par-

is, where he worked, among others, with a renowned *nouvelle vague* author Claude Chabrol, made his breakthrough with the film *Ples v dežju* (*Dancing in the Rain* – 1961), which was well received by the critics and sophisticated public, but it was less understood and liked by the wider public. The melancholy and existential despair from *Dancing in the Rain* were replaced then in *Sand Castle* by a frivolous focus on the present-day joy of life in the manner of the recognisable modernist attitude and in the footstep of the New Wave movement in European cinema. Accordingly, "ideology" or any explicit topics from political reality seem to be absent from the film, except for the so much more forceful concluding scenes of the film. The narrative is very rudimentary: the main character after failing his university exam travels in his *deux cheveaux* car to the sea and picks up two hitch-hikers, a boy and a girl. The film afterwards develops into a love-triangle-road-movie in black and white technology. It was shot in very bright photography lit by summer sunshine. Contributing to the whole aesthetic impression, the movements of the camera follow the dynamism and vitality of the three youngsters. The film reminds one of Jean-Luc Godard and his film *Crazy Pete* (*Pierrot le fou* – 1965), which was actually shot three years *later* than Hladnik's "Castle". The political signifiers, which were always decipherable in the new wave cinema, signal an existential conflict between an individual and the social system, which is, within the narrative structure, a source of senselessness and of the particular "crazy" reactions of characters. In Hladnik's film, Milena's behaviour (the female character) is explained at the end of film as a consequence of her traumatic childhood experience. At the end of the film, viewers are told by a doctor from a psychiatric hospital that the traumatised girl was born in a concentration camp. Just before this, Milena vanishes on the shore of the Adriatic Sea, as also does Godard's Ferdinand in a different manner on the shore of the French Riviera. At the time of the first screenings of the film, viewers were forced to realise that barely over a decade and a half had passed from the end of the World War II. The character of the girl, born in the troubled times of World War II and living in the times of illusionary normalcy thus stands for an identity problem of the whole generation of the modernist period. Interestingly, the film looks clearly more suggestive in the light of wars in Yugoslavia after the end of socialism, due to its contrasting of the joys and the pleasures of youth with the traumatic final signal from history.

The critical public at the time was not as enthusiastic about the film as in the case of the first Hladnik's film, which was substantially more strongly determined by the literary cannon. Niko Grafenauer, mostly still known in Slovenia for his poetry and for his political alliances with the right-wing politics, not so long before and immediately after the end of Yugoslavia, at the time wrote:

> *The film lacks almost everything in its dramatic shape: solid narrative with organically included dialogue, conceptual composition, and especially the presence of time reality. Instead of the film telling about a world like it is* […]*, it deceives the viewer into a fiction, into a lie that is entirely foreign to our contemporary environment and often borders on absurdity* (Grafenauer, 1963, 279).

What Grafenauer holds against the film are exactly those attributes that qualify the film as an accomplished masterpiece of the new wave cinema. His discourse, interestingly, coincided with any typical phrasing within the Communist Party rhetoric of the time, which distinguished the "quality" of works of art on the basis of their corresponding to "our reality" and circumstances.[4] However, the ideological agents of the Party, which had its say in everything social, did not see any problem with this film. Another critic, who saw symptoms of "escapism" in the film, had more understanding for Hladnik's message:

> *The end and beginning of the film join into a mighty chord. It's not twenty years since the times of the concentration camps, slowly sinking into oblivion, but in the world that is still not completely healed from wounds, there is not enough humanism, warmth, air, sun and peace* (Černej, 1963, 284).

In any case, my point is, that Hladnik's film can be taken as evidence of the existence of free space for artistic production within the system of self-management socialism. Even more, "controversial" author's like Hladnik were financed through the institutional channels of the film production of the time.

FROM MODERNISM TO AVANT-GARDE

Hladnik's work in film was not just a product of some *genius loci*. His references to the cinematic New Wave were quite direct due to his studies and practice in Paris between 1957 and 1960. Especially after the opening of Yugoslavia to the West, following the clash with Stalin's Russia, such contacts were not so very exceptional. The well-educated representatives of the Yugoslav baby boom generation more than followed suit. Students and academics were well travelled, various grants (such as the Fulbright grant) were available and many informal contacts between intellectuals from the West and, to an extent, from the East existed. Youth organisations and various agencies offered numerous possibilities for travel, learning and training all over Europe and America. Later in the 1960s and especially the 1970s, students travelled to distant places in the Far East together with their Western counterparts, who searched for self-fulfilment in places like Afghanistan, India and Sri Lanka. At the same time, Yugoslav institutions financed visits and studies abroad and some of these grants were available also to students and young researchers in the fields of social sciences and humanities. Of course, as ever, students of more "tangible" subjects in natural sciences were allegedly preferred.[5] Therefore, contrary to the grim portrayals of the period of "communist

4 I cannot enter here into a debate on hegemonic discourses, but still let me just remark that what had been the hard-core dogmatic thinking of Communist Party intellectual hardliners, seamlessly transformed into the post-communist discourses of right wing politics, which still take modernist emancipation as a threat to "our values".

5 I am not sure about the availability of any statistics concerning this aspect. It would take a special effort to search for them in the archives. It is also questionable whether documentations of some agencies such as the Agency for International Scientific and Technological Exchange of Slovenia (ZAMTES) still exist or not. Therefore, my assertion is mainly hypothetical, and it is based on my own perception from the time.

dictatorship" in today's chronicles of anti-communism, Yugoslavia was culturally open to the world, which includes all forms of popular culture as well. Still, one should not idealise these times since a not very high degree of censorship, and especially the restrictions of political freedoms, were in place. Yugoslav intelligence services also paid some attention and kept their records about many of these travels and contacts.[6] However, the authorities did not prevent artistic inventions and intellectual activities, which transcended local spaces. The artistic productions and ideas were inscribed into the modernist nomadic movements of ideas. Still, some of these inventions, actions, attitudes and statements provoked critical reactions from the side of the "cultural elite", which was close to the Party leadership.

In the history of modern art in Slovenia an artistic group, the self-named *OHO*, was the best example of eruptive artistic invention, based also on the breakthrough aesthetics of the time. Saying that *OHO* was the "best example" implies that this example was well embedded in a wider framework of modernism in the Republic of Slovenia. The movements corresponding to the ones in the rest of Yugoslavia – mentioned in the second section of this paper – and some quite specific Slovenian ones sprung up in 1950s and 1960s. So, I am mentioning just briefly some examples in performing arts like *Oder 57* (*Stage 57*) and closer to the time of the appearance of *OHO*, the Experimental Theatre *Glej* (*Watch*) in 1960s. Somewhat corresponding to the breakthrough of *OHO* were the especially interesting performance group the *Theatre of Pupilija Ferkeverk* and the alternative theatre *Pekarna* (*Bakery*) which appeared soon after the *OHO*'s interventions. The context of modernist culture was further supported also in music by, for instance, *Pro Musica Viva*. Virtually all of the most important Slovenian modern composers like Petrič, Srebotnjak, Stibilj, (Darjan) Božič and others have been members of this group, which broke the traditional cannons in music. Almost needless to say, the field of literature – especially prominent for the Slovenian culture – made part of the whole context. Besides the already fairly well-established writers like Kovačič, Zupan or Božič, at the time younger writers and poets like Švabič, Kovač "Chubby" and, of course, the highest ranked modernist poet Tomaž Šalamun, contributed to the widening of free cultural space. Šalamun was himself a most outspoken member of *OHO*. All this could be further contextualised in more cosmopolitan terms:

> *The OHO group was created in the atmosphere of new international and local artistic, aesthetic, philosophical, cultural and social movements such as Slovenian reism, French structuralism, Tel Quel and international post-structuralism, New Left, hippie culture, and then poor art (arte povera), antiform art, body art, experimental film, conceptual art, post-project artistic practices and ludism* (Šuvaković, 2012, 289).

6 I had my own experience of this surveillance. When I came back from a student summer exchange programme in the USA in 1971, I was invited to the headquarters of the Slovenian branch of UJV (Administration of Public Safety) for what, indeed, was really just a polite inquiry into my impressions about the States. The officer was, of course, especially interested in my eventual encounters with Yugoslav political emigrants, whom I had not met anyway.

A breakthrough manifestation was the 1968 exhibition of the group's work at the Modern Gallery in Ljubljana, which was accompanied by a special edition of the journal *Problemi* that for this occasion transgressed a framework of publishing mainly literature and literary theory. A special edition under the title *Katalog* featured some highly sophisticated structuralist texts (some original and some translations) and some characteristic "visual poetry", a mind-boggling comic strip, etc. *Problemi* in this case

> […] *connected with the new developments within the art scene, the first example of which was the cooperation with the OHO group in the 1960s. In very broad terms, the OHO group, in the history of Slovenian art, marks 'the shift from modernism to avant-garde'* (Irwin & Motoh, 2014, 29).

Contrary to the not so much interested or in any sense easily shocked audiences of today, the phenomenon of *OHO* prompted a lively debate amongst general public. A difficulty in understanding how such a wide public could have been provoked by conceptual art displays a change in the position of art considering the trajectory of its showing from the 1960s onwards.

> *In the first phase, the conceptual basis for the movement was reism (lat. res = the thing). In art, OHO rejected the self-evidence of an established anthropocentric view of the world, in which man is superior to objects and classifies them only through his hierarchical system of usability and purpose. OHO wanted to establish a new, more democratic attitude towards the world* (Nečimer, 2018).

A larger group, which consisted of a number of more or less younger philosophers, art historians and sociologists, mingling with artists and poets, later on narrowed to a group of artists, of whom some – like Pogačnik and Matanović – happen to be still quite active. Anyhow, their early actions and performances have been considered to be scandalous, which triggered a public reaction by a group of "traditional" critics and artists, who voiced their disagreements in strangely political terms after the manifestation of *OHO* group's work in the Modern Gallery and after the publication of *Problemi – Katalog*. The title of their protest, which was published in the main daily *Delo* in the autumn 1968, was *Democracy Yes, Destruction No*! Although the first undersigned Matej Bor, the lyrical poet and playwright and Josip Vidmar, a literary critic and highly esteemed personality of the Slovenian pre-war and post-war culture, have been well connected to the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Slovenia, one cannot ascertain that the action of the "fundamentalists", who defended the "true art", was commanded by the authorities. Still, the whole scandal coincided with the political process of the time. An unusually publicly open quarrel between the Slovenian government of Stane Kavčič and the federal authorities broke out over the distribution of foreign loans for infrastructural projects. Slovenia was longing for a highway from the Capital Ljubljana to the Adriatic Sea and it was unable to secure a loan for the desired amount. The whole event is firmly placed in history as the "road

affair" at the same time as the beginning of the end of the period of Yugoslav "liberalism". Of course, the group *OHO* had not much to do with this affair, but it contributed to the whole atmosphere of suspense.

Actually, *OHO* continued its work and won, at first, Yugoslav and later on international acclaim. It could be a matter of guessing as to what extent the group was left to exhibit its work without any problems worth mentioning, due to the fact that subsequent and politically much more outspoken activities took place. The activities I have in mind here transcended the field of aesthetics and the provocations of modernist abstract gestures. Since, in some cases, not only just metaphoric "too outspoken" artistic products and the unexpected students' movements, along with the public criticism by some social scientists were objects of censorship and even repression, a hypothesis that the freedom of modernist art represented just a "safety valve", gradually gained some support already in its time. Nevertheless, even so, different artefacts bear witness to the fact that the society under the rule of socialism, especially in the period of, by this time, well developed self-management, was not so "closed" to different ideas as many superficial journalists and anti-communist speakers would have it.

CONCLUSION: THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

The two cases and their contexts, briefly presented above, can serve as the two among many possible examples of lively cosmopolitan, aesthetically accomplished and to various degrees controversial activities in the period at the end of the age of European modernism. Not only in Yugoslavia, but also in the relatively tighter controlled countries (i.e. Poland and Czechoslovakia) such phenomena were visible. However, a quite high degree of tolerance by the authorities and the ideological controllers for the artistic work had its limits, which were not always clearly defined, and which varied in different periods. Prevalently the Serb "black wave" (č*rni val*) in the cinema of the 1960s and the early 1970s even got high praises for its international success, but it became "problematic" in the context of a new ideological "frost" in mid 1970s. In spite of some pressures and the prevention of some films from public showing, a new generation of film makers – actually educated by "black wave" film authors – continued to shoot similar films with a slightly visible higher degree of prudency. On the other hand, at the time also the very style of new wave underwent great transformations all over Europe anyway.

The topic of freedom of expression in art and in the humanities in public life was followed by stronger controversies in politics. Numerous international communications between the then younger generations brought about a "Western type" left wing student movements mainly in three Yugoslav republics: Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia. These movements were interwoven with some currents among intellectuals, who openly cooperated with Western counterparts in the fields of the so-called Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School and New Left politics. The movements, which could be labelled as the movements for a *democratic socialism*, were most loudly expressed in student demonstrations in 1968 and at the Ljubljana occupation of Faculty of Arts in 1971.

> *The student movements and their simultaneously New Leftist, spiritual exotistic and liberal emancipatory political platform were directed against the bureaucracy and technocracy of the capitalist Cold War society in France, Germany and the USA, and, on the other side, against post-revolutionary bureaucracy and etatisation, i.e. deviations from revolutionary utopias in real-communist cold-war societies, for example, in Yugoslavia or Poland* (Šuvaković, 2012, 149).

The artistic events, products, performances, etc. functioned in a sense as the signifiers of the dilemmas, with which the Yugoslav Party leadership and its rank and file had to deal with. And maybe they all together were not even aware that these dilemmas were the consequences of the emancipatory potential generated by the introduction of the self-management model of "people's participation" in the affairs of economy and social life. However, they realised on their own terms that an undefined inevitable social change was looming, which led to the "purification" of the ranks in the League of Communists and within the whole structure of power in all federal units. New political forces within the Party in Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia – personalised by Stane Kavčič in Slovenia, Savka Dabčević-Kučar in Croatia and Latinka Perović and Marko Nikezić in Serbia – were targeted as "deviations" from the "right direction" although these movements had not so much in common.

Yugoslav communists were stunned and confused when they had to come to terms with the New Leftist critical discourse. Unfortunately, the ideological bodies within the Party could not recognise the potential for a decisive up-grade of the unique Yugoslav socialist model and so they have chosen to perceive the leftist movements as the enemies of the regime. The fact that within ideological and political ranks of the Party, the "old guard" had a significant say in the whole decision making, it should be recognised as one of the reasons for the inadequate communication. Not only the role of the charismatic personality of Tito, but also the position of the "partisan generation" were quite firmly hindering the changing of the course, although at the 8th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia in 1964 it almost seemed that an ideological opening was conceivable. I am not saying anything definitive about this, but I think that a detailed discursive analysis of the Party's rhetoric of the time would uncover a combination of reasons for a grand misunderstanding with the rebellious youth and the intellectual opposition. These reasons in my view touch upon the structure of power and the positions of different institutional and social agencies within it, like the army, "technocratic" management and local political elites. Some intellectual voices within the Party apparatus were regrettably too feeble to change the course, but they did influence a degree of softness in the acts of repression against the political opponents.

Anyhow, within these coordinates, a somewhat harder repressive politics became apparent in mid 1970s. The secret police contributed its share by producing surreptitious information sheets concerning a "special warfare", in which in its view the New Left played a role. Scientific seminars, summer schools, symposiums, scholarships and student strikes were followed and analyzed on the basis of such paranoid pat-

terns of the perception of political reality. In view of such reading of the activities of student movements, groups of philosophers, social scientists and other intellectuals appeared as that they

> […] *were led by the 'ideas of 68', where 'anarcho-liberals' experienced their own historical promotion openly appearing as opponents of the official SKJ (League of Communists) line, criticizing the economic reforms, the 'frustrated ideology' of the SKJ, the mediocrities on the leadership positions, who were unable to solve basic social problems and social inequality (the 'red bourgeoisie' slogan!). In addition to Belgrade, the second center was in Zagreb (journal Praxis and Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb), then there was a group of professors and students at the University of Ljubljana, less in other universities centers (Sarajevo, Skopje)* (Cvetković, 2011, 40).

In spite of some more open-minded gestures by some "enlightened" Party leaders, including the main Tito's "ideologue" Edvard Kardelj, who tried one last "reform" in the later 1970s to empower social actors within the plurality of self-managed institutions, it can be concluded that the Party missed the opportunity to make the modernising alliances with the New Left. Still, the end of the 1970s brought about a new political thaw in a strange concomitance with initiatives, tendencies and impulses in the direction of the dissolution of the country. But, a necessary social invention, which would maybe make a substantial difference in the mode of exiting the socialist model of self-management did not happen.

POLITIKA IN ESTETIKA DEMOKRATIČNEGA SOCIALIZMA V JUGOSLOVANSKI MODERNI. PRIMER JUGOSLOVANSKEGA MODERNIZMA IN NJEGOVEGA VPLIVA: NEKAJ ZGLEDOV PREBOJNE UMETNOSTI V KONTEKSTU SAMOUPRAVLJANJA

Darko ŠTRAJN

Pedagoški inštitut, Gerbičeva 62, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenija

e-mail: darko.strajn@guest.arnes.si

POVZETEK

Značaj mladenke v filmu Peščeni grad *(1962), rojene v težavnih časih druge svetovne vojne in živeče v obdobju iluzorne normalnosti, predstavlja identitetni problem celotne generacije modernističnega obdobja. Film, ki ga je režiral Boštjan Hladnik, lahko dojemamo kot dokaz, da obdobje socializma v Jugoslaviji ni bilo samo "črna luknja zgodovine". Nasprotno! Nekatera obdobja v Jugoslaviji so bila umetniško in intelektualno zelo produktivna. Še posebej po spopadu s Stalinovo Sovjetsko zvezo so številne mednarodne zveze med tedanjimi mlajšimi generacijami postopoma prinesle "zahodni tip" levičarskih študentskih gibanj. Ta gibanja so bila prepletena z nekaterimi intelektualnimi tokovi, ki so odkrito sodelovali z zahodnimi kolegi na področjih kritične teorije in politik nove levice. Gibanja, ki bi jih lahko označili kot gibanja za demokratični socializem, so se najbolj glasno izrazila na študentskih demonstracijah leta 1968 in v ljubljanski zasedbi Filozofske fakultete leta 1971. Članek temelji na kritičnem dekonstruktivnem branju dela obdobja modernizma v Jugoslaviji in se opira na pristop kulturnih študij za osvetlitev zgodovine.*

Ključne besede: film, socializem, Jugoslavija, nova levica, Zahod, umetnost

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BLOWING UP THE SELF-MANAGEMENT BUBBLE: YUGOSLAV PROPAGANDA AND ITALIAN RECEPTION IN THE EARLY 1970s

Benedetto ZACCARIA
European University Institute, Department of History and Civilization,
Via Bolognese 156, 50139 Florence, Italy
e-mail: benedetto.zaccaria@eui.eu

ABSTRACT

Drawing on primary sources from the Archives of Yugoslavia and several Italian archival collections, this article shows that, in the early 1970s, faced with mounting internal problems, the Yugoslav leadership reappraised its self-management propaganda in order to convey the image of a reforming and modernising country. This was functional to the external projection of the country's stability, and to favouring its relations with Western European partners, Italy in primis. This article develops in three sections. First, it reappraises the historical development of Italian-Yugoslav relations after World War II, to highlight their political limitation and their link to Yugoslavia's policy towards Western Europe. Second, it shows how the internal crisis experienced by the Yugoslav federation in the early 1970s led to the rediscovery of self-management propaganda. Particular attention is paid to the organisation of the Second Congress of Yugoslav self-managers in Sarajevo (May 1971) and its clear-cut external dimension. Third, this paper discusses the instrumental dimension of the self-management discourse in Italy until the mid-1970s.

Keywords: Yugoslavia, self-management, Italy, Western Europe, Democrazia Cristiana, Partito Socialista Italiano, Partito Comunista Italiano

LA BOLLA DELL'AUTOGESTIONE: PROPAGANDA JUGOSLAVA E RICEZIONE IN ITALIA NEI PRIMI ANNI SETTANTA

SINTESI

Basato su fonti primarie provenienti dall'archivio centrale jugoslavo (Arhiv Jugoslavije) a Belgrado e da svariati fondi archivistici italiani, il presente articolo dimostra che nei primi anni Settanta, di fronte a crescenti problemi interni, la leadership jugoslava riscoprì l'uso dell'autogestione per rappresentare l'immagine di un paese riformista e moderno. Ciò fu funzionale alla proiezione esterna della stabilità della federazione ed a favorire le relazioni con i paesi dell'Europa occidentale, in particolare l'Italia. L'articolo si sviluppa in tre sezioni. La prima presenta lo sviluppo delle relazioni italo-jugoslave

dopo la Seconda Guerra Mondiale, per evidenziare i limiti politici di tali rapporti ed il loro legame con la politica jugoslava verso l'Europa occidentale. Il secondo dimostra come la crisi interna della federazione jugoslava nei primi anni Settanta condusse alla riscoperta della propaganda sull'autogestione. Particolare attenzione è prestata all'organizzazione del Secondo Congresso degli Autogestori jugoslavi a Sarajevo (maggio 1971), e alla chiara dimensione internazionale di quest'ultimo. In terzo luogo, l'articolo discute la dimensione strumentale del discorso pubblico sull'autogestione in Italia fino alla metà degli anni Settanta.

Parole chiave: Jugoslavia, autogestione, Italia, Europa occidentale, Democrazia Cristiana, Partito Socialista Italiano, Partito Comunista Italiano

INTRODUCTION[1]

This article addresses the external use of self-management as Yugoslavia's propaganda tool to foster its *rapprochement* to Western Europe, and Italy in particular, during the early 1970s. Traditionally, Yugoslavia's self-management has been considered as a domestic phenomenon, and historiographical attention has therefore concentrated on its internal origins and later developments (Unkovski-Korica, 2016; Musić, 2016). Only recently have scholars started to assess the reception of the Yugoslav "laboratory" abroad. The very first published studies on the circulation of self-management "ideas" beyond Yugoslavia have taken into particular regard their theoretical dimension (Estrin & Uvalić, 2008) and the indirect influence on the development of industrial relations in Western Europe during the 1970s (Zaccaria, 2018a; Georgi, 2018). However, the use of self-management propaganda as a foreign policy instrument represents an under-researched field.

The present essay aims at filling this historiographical gap. Moving beyond the strictly scholarly dimension of Western debates on Yugoslavia's labour-managed system, this analysis illustrates how self-management was used by the Yugoslav leadership to shape a "modernity label" in order to favour Yugoslavia's relations with its Western European partners, with particular attention to the Italian case. As shown by recent literature, since the mid-1960s Italy had emerged as Yugoslavia's main political partner in Western Europe, as sanctioned by the Treaties of Osimo of November 1975, which settled the border problem between the two countries – a troubled legacy of World War II – and envisaged the development of bilateral relations in the political and economic spheres (Zaccaria, 2018b; Mišić, 2018; Bucarelli, 2013; Škorjanec, 2007; Pirjevec, Klabjan & Bajc, 2006). The *rapprochement* between Rome and Belgrade between the late 1960s and early 1970s made Italy a fertile ground for Yugoslavia's propaganda and the development of debates on self-management in the Italian political arena. This essay investigates the rationale of such debates, focusing on the specific reception by Italy's leading political parties: the Christian Democrat party (Democrazia Cristiana – DC), the Italian Socialist Party (Partito Socialista Italiano – PSI) and the Italian Communist Party (Partito Comunista Italiano – PCI). This article develops in three sections. First, it reappraises the historical development of Italian-Yugoslav relations after World War II, to highlight their political limitation and their link to Yugoslavia's policy towards its Western European partners. Second, it shows how the internal crisis experienced by the Yugoslav federation in the early 1970s forced Belgrade to use self-management as a propaganda tool to convey the image of a reforming country. Particular attention is paid to the organisation of the Second Congress of Yugoslav self-managers in Sarajevo (May 1971) and its clear-cut external dimension. This section also considers the coincidence between the reappraisal of self-management in Yugoslavia and the mounting discourse on "industrial democracy" among socialist and social democratic parties in Western Europe. Third, the article dis-

1 The research leading to this article is part of the project PanEur1970s, which has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (Grant Agreement No. 669194).

cusses the instrumental dimension of the self-management discourse in Italy until the mid-1970s. The study concludes that an indirect and yet converging interest developed between the Yugoslav leadership and Italy's major political parties to foster propaganda on Yugoslavia's peculiar system.

YUGOSLAVIA, ITALY AND WESTERN EUROPE

After the end of World War II, Yugoslavia emerged as one of the most loyal and orthodox allies of the Soviet Union. Very soon, however, Tito's reaction against Stalin's hegemonic plans in Eastern Europe altered the course of relations between Moscow and Belgrade, leading to the Tito-Stalin split (1948). In Western Europe, the public image of Yugoslavia changed accordingly: from an orthodox Soviet ally to a courageous opponent of Soviet rule. At internal level, the Yugoslav government reformed the country's economic organisation. The *Basic Law on the Management of State Enterprises* was passed (1950), leading to the constitution of workers' elected councils. The newly established system, based on radical economic de-Stalinisation, envisaged the withering away of the state as a central planner, the social ownership of the means of production and, at least in theory, the direct participation of workers in the management of enterprises (Denitch, 1976). This was a political move, linked to the need to legitimise Yugoslavia's national road to socialism, faced with the rise of "anti-Titoist" campaigns in the Soviet bloc (Unkovski-Korica, 2016).

At international level, the rupture with Moscow obliged Belgrade to look for new partners: this meant a renewed relationship with post-colonial leaderships, resulting in the establishment of the non-aligned movement in 1961 (Bogetić, 2006; Rajak, 2014). However, in the immediate aftermath of the Tito-Stalin split, Belgrade's attention turned towards the West. The Western powers, and the United States *in primis*, were not deaf to Yugoslavia's requests for support: Tito was therefore kept "afloat" through financial and military assistance (Laković, 2006 and 2015; Lees, 1997; Heuser, 1989). Since the mid-1950s, the United States were replaced by Western European countries as Belgrade's most prominent economic and political partners. This was the immediate result of the economic boom which had characterised Western Europe since the mid-1950s. Among the member states of the European Economic Community (EEC), Italy gradually emerged as Yugoslavia's most important commercial and political partner. This *rapprochement* was somehow revolutionary. Indeed, since the end of World War II, relations between the two countries had been affected by the definition of the state border and, later, by the implementation of the so-called Free Territory of Trieste (FTT). Envisaged by the 1947 Peace Treaty, the latter was never established due to the direct confrontation between Italy, supported by its Western partners, and Yugoslavia, sided by Moscow. Even after the Tito-Stalin split in 1948, political relations between Rome and Belgrade remained tense. This bilateral tension was resolved due to the mediation of the Western powers, which encouraged the two countries to reach a *de facto* settlement – the Memorandum of Understanding signed in London in October 1954 – based on the division of the FFT into two zones (A and B) to be administered respectively by Rome and Belgrade. The Italian

Parliament did not ratify the Memorandum, as Italy's leading parties were not ready to officially renounce to the Italian sovereignty over zone B[2]. However, the settlement reached in London allowed for the re-launching of bilateral relations: Italy and Yugoslavia had decided to separate the territorial question from economic and political considerations, as both leaderships realised the advantages stemming from enhanced cooperation (Ruzicic-Kessler, 2014, 645–647; Bucarelli, 2013, 33–38).

The Italian industrial boom, reverberating in rapid social modernisation, was a leading factor in the reconciliation between the two countries. Changing patterns in the Italian "way of life" – primarily inspired by the American model (Scoppola, 1991, 291–295) – also affected the Yugoslav cultural scene, during a period when industrialisation and urbanisation in the Yugoslav federation were leading to the birth of a new consumer-oriented middle-class society (Calic, 2011). Italian popular culture – from music to fashion – became a reference model for Yugoslavia's young generations (Rolandi, 2015). Economically, since the mid-1950s Yugoslavia had entered a phase of rapid industrialisation which needed Western financing and technology (Obadić, 2014). As a bordering country participating in the process of economic integration in Western Europe, Italy represented a privileged partner. Rome also intended to expand its economic influence in the Balkan region – a traditional Italian sphere of interest. Moreover, beyond economic interests, relations developed after the establishment of the first centre-left coalition in Italy, led by Aldo Moro (December 1963). This coalition government, based on collaboration between DC and PSI, meant a veritable step forward in Italian attitudes towards Yugoslavia (Bucarelli, 2013, 35–38). Moro, as the representative of the progressive wing of the Italian Christian Democrats, aimed at expanding relations with Italy's socialist partners (Monzali, 2012, 89–114). Yugoslavia soon became the target of the new coalition's foreign policy goals. The Socialist party, a traditional admirer of Yugoslavia's "third way" in international relations, followed and encouraged Moro's attitude. Antonio De Martino, Italian Vice-Prime Minister and Secretary of the PSI, visited Belgrade in 1964, praising the virtues of the country's innovative economic system and its position between the European blocs.[3] One year later, in November 1965, Moro paid the first visit of an Italian Prime Minister to Yugoslavia since the end of World War II. His mission coincided with the launch of a major process of economic reforms in Yugoslavia, which aimed at integrating the country in the international market and envisaged the introduction of market mechanisms in the internal economic system (Obadić, 2014).

Throughout the 1960s, Belgrade also developed direct contacts with the EEC, having Rome as its prominent partner and advocate. The course of Yugoslavia's relations with the Community accelerated after August 1968, as the Soviet intervention in Prague in that month raised Yugoslav – and Western – fears about Moscow's alleged expansionistic plans in the Balkans and the Mediterranean (Bajc, 2016). In October 1968, commercial negotiations between Yugoslavia and the EEC opened, in order to create a contractual

2 As recalled later, the border question was resolved by the Osimo Agreements (1975) which entered into force in 1977.

3 ASSR, UA 372, Viaggio della delegazione del Partito socialista italiano in Jugoslavia, giugno 1964.

link between Belgrade and Brussels. Italy strongly advocated Yugoslavia's trade requests, especially in the agricultural field, confirming its role as a *porte-parole* of Belgrade's interests within the Community up to the conclusion of the first EEC-Yugoslav trade agreement in 1970 (Zaccaria, 2016, 13–46). Soon after the Prague events, the Italian Foreign Ministry also decided to start secret talks with its Yugoslav counterpart to overcome the border problem: the goal was to eliminate the last – and yet cumbersome – factor of controversy between Rome and Belgrade. The Italian political leadership agreed on the initiative coming from its diplomatic apparatus, but insisted that it should be kept secret: it was aware that the country's public opinion still regarded the Trieste question as a sensitive topic. The centre-left coalition was also facing widespread students' and workers' protests and – with them – an overall legitimacy crisis: in this framework, announcing the solution of the border question through the renunciation of zone B of the FTT could shift the political balance of the country. In the late 1960s, Yugoslavia's image in Italy was therefore still affected by the border issue. Overall, this limited the room for manoeuvre of the Italian political leadership in relations with Belgrade, confining the latter to the economic domain (Zaccaria, 2018b, 36–41).

REDISCOVERING THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF SELF-MANAGEMENT

In the early 1970s, Yugoslavia was also affected by clear-cut internal problems, due to the rise of inflation, turmoil in underdeveloped regions – Kosovo *in primis* – and the rise of the nationalistic discourse, particularly in Croatia. The market-oriented reforms of the mid-1960s were increasingly blamed for being responsible of the economic deterioration of the country (Ramet, 2006, 234–240).

It was in this delicate political juncture that the party leadership discussed the need for a public reappraisal of Yugoslavia's internal system through the re-launching and strengthening of self-management (Deveti kongres SKJ, 143–144, 148–160). This strategy was also intended to foster Yugoslavia's international status. In fact, the Department of Information and Political Propaganda of the Savez Komunista Jugoslavije (SKJ) was noting increasing Western scepticism towards the impact of liberal reforms on the self-management system. A departmental note dated April 1971, summarised Western concerns – based on analysis of specialised press and scholarly works on Yugoslavia – concerning the "degradation" of self-management as one effect of the privatisation and "bureaucratisation" of economic activities, and its limitation to the enterprise sector without effects on social relations. The consequence of this – from the Western perspective – was the loosening of ties between the League and the popular masses, and an overall crisis of Yugoslavia's economic system and internal relations. The decline of self-management, traditionally considered in the West as "the pillar of Yugoslavia's regime", was also supposed to concern relations between the northern republics (Slovenia and Croatia) and the underdeveloped south.[4] As in the early

4 AJ, KPR, II-5-e-1, Predsedništvo SKJ, Odeljenje za političko-propagandno delovanje i informacije, Pov. Br. 11/40, 26. 4. 1971, 98.

1950s, when the Yugoslav leadership had demonstrated to its new Western partners its independent course through the launch of the labour-managed reforms, the crisis of self-management required to re-launch the public image of Yugoslavia's economic system. This reappraisal of self-management was therefore linked to the importance, for Yugoslavia, to discard Western concerns about the federation's stability and to confirm its image as a *sui generis* socialist country among Western European political and intellectual circles. In particular, what the Yugoslav party leadership expected *vis-à-vis* Italy was to maintain a special partnership based on Yugoslavia's status as a peculiar socialist regime which offered a stable alternative to Soviet bloc economies. In 1970, this was clearly expressed by Italian Prime Minister, Giovanni Leone, during a meeting with Toma Granfil, a member of the Yugoslav government in charge of relations with the EEC. Responding to Granfil's appeals for enhanced cooperation and trade with Italy, Leone noted that it was in Italian interest to support Yugoslavia's "laboratory", that is, an "*experiment* [which is] *followed in Italy with sympathy and interest: this means indeed the creation of a country with Socialist and Marxist roots, but free and independent*".[5]

The reconsideration of self-management propaganda intersected with the rise of social discontent in Western Europe. Students' and workers' protests, from the French "May" of 1968 to Italy's "Hot Autumn" of 1969 revived intellectual and political debates on the issue of industrial democracy as a way to solve social discontent. The search for a "third way" overcoming the dichotomy between the "state" and the "market" characterised such debates (Balfour, 1973). As shown by recent research, self-management was "re-discovered" by Western European social democratic and socialist parties as an alternative, theoretical model of economic, social and political organisation. In Western Europe the ground was therefore receptive for Yugoslavia's efforts to re-launch the public discourse on self-management. In France, the public debate promoted by the country's leading trade unions on such issue contributed towards establishing the Soudreau Commission (1974) devoted to the enlargement of workers' rights in the workplace. At the same time, in West Germany the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD) reformed and expanded the *Mitbestimmung* system. Such debates were not immune from the broader diplomatic aspects of Yugoslavia's international position and, in particular, from Bonn's foreign policy towards Belgrade within the framework of the SPD-led *Neue-Ostpolitik* (Zaccaria, 2018a, 213–235).

This foreign policy dimension is particularly well shown by analysis of the Italian case. Throughout the 1950s, interest in the Yugoslav model had been primarily nurtured by academic and cultural élites. This was the case, for example, of progressive and "lay" journals and periodicals such as *Il Ponte* – which published the first thorough analysis of the innovative characters of the Yugoslav "laboratory" in Italy[6] – and federalist-oriented *Democrazia integrale*, which in the mid-1950s had paid particular attention to the Yu-

5 ASPR, Ufficio consigliere diplomatico, b. 130, Colloquio On. Leone – Ministro jugoslavo per il Coordinamento del Commercio con l'Estero, 20. 9. 1968, 188.
6 Il Ponte, XI, n. 8–9, August–September, 1955: Jugoslavia d'oggi.

goslav experience as a model of economic and social organisation (Favaretto, 1965). However, it was only between the late 1960s and early 1970s that the "self-managed discourse" began to shift from the academic to the political arena.

As for the DC, it was the party's left, inclined to social principles, to be affected by the development of the debates on "industrial democracy" which had emerged within the Catholic world after the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) (Sergio, 2009; Taviani, 1972). The DC's official newspaper, *Il Popolo,* did not ignore the Yugoslav model. The Christian democratic press emphasised the difference between the Yugoslav system and the Soviet model of state-led economic organisation, and the market mechanisms regulating the self-managed enterprises.[7] Such a narrative fitted the political-diplomatic efforts by the party's leadership to improve Yugoslavia's image in Italy. The publicity given by the DC leadership to the first (troubled) visit of Tito to Italy in 1971 (Bajc, 2014; Mišić, 2011) bears witness to the attention paid by the party to the public dimension of relations with Belgrade.[8] In these circumstances, public appreciation for Yugoslavia's system, aimed at "humanising the social environment", had also been publicly expressed by Pope Paul VI, contributing to the success of the visit (Barberini, 2007, 267–274).

While the DC's engagement with the Yugoslav question was primarily linked to the latter's foreign policy dimension, it was the PSI – which participated in the governing coalitions from 1968 to 1969 (Rumor I) and from 1970 to 1972 (Rumor II and Colombo) – which showed a genuine interest in Yugoslavia and its model. In fact, the PSI's attention to the issue of labour-managed economies had surfaced since the immediate post-World War II years, when the party had unsuccessfully campaigned for the creation of "management councils" (*consigli di gestione*) in enterprises (Pinto, 2008). The issue of workers' participation had re-emerged on the PSI political agenda in the 1960s, due to the influence of the debate on self-management raised in France by Socialist Gilles Martinet and philosopher Henri Lefebvre (Achilli & Dambrosio, 1976). In the late 1960s, faced with rising social and political unrest, the PSI had therefore set the improvement of workers' conditions as its main political priority, and attention had focused on the drafting of the Workers' Statute (*Statuto dei Lavoratori*) (Nenni, 1977, 97–123).

It was not by chance that this Statute, originally conceived by the Minister of Work, the Socialist Giacomo Brodolini, examined the question of workers' participation (Lanaro, 1992, 360). An axis was created with the DC "left", as witnessed by the engagement of Carlo Donat Cattin, Brodolini's successor, to implement the Workers' Statute in 1970. But, beyond ideological and domestic considerations, foreign policy goals added to the Italian socialists' attitude towards Yugoslavia and its internal system. In 1969, Pietro Nenni, a leading party member and then Minister for Foreign Affairs, had actively supported the solution of the border problem with Italy and Yugoslavia's economic integration in the Western system (Zaccaria, 2018b, 48–50). This was reflected in public rhetoric. The Party's newspaper, *Avanti!*, recurrently praised Yugoslavia's labour-managed economy as

7 Il Popolo, 27. 2. 1970: Democrazia e partecipazione – 1. L'Autogestione.

8 Il Popolo, 25. 3. 1971: Tito da oggi a Roma in visita ufficiale; Il Popolo, 28. 3. 1971: Il Presidente Tito visita gli stabilimenti della FIAT.

a challenge to the USSR model.[9] In direct contacts between representatives of the PSI and League of Communists of Yugoslavia, Italian socialists were eager to confirm the party's open support towards Yugoslavia's independence and territorial integrity, promising this at governmental level.[10]

It was in this favourable context that the SKJ leadership started to rationalise its propaganda efforts. To achieve this goal, in July 1969 an *ad hoc* office was created – under the leadership of Dušan Petrović-Šane, a member of the League's Executive Committee, to organise the Second Congress of Yugoslav Self-managers.[11] This initiative, later held in Sarajevo in May 1971, had domestic and external goals. Internally, it was a regressive move aimed at overcoming the alleged flaws of the market-oriented reforms; challenging "bureaucratic and technocratic" forces hindering the social power of the working class and, lastly, re-launching a "modern and self-managed society".[12] Externally – which is of interest for the purposes of this article – the re-launch of self-management aimed at presenting the renewed image of a country able to reform itself and overcome its tense internal situation. In this regard, an internal note of the Group for Social and Political Questions of the Presidency of the Republic, dated 8 January 1971, noted that:

> *The preparation of the congress coincides with a moment in which there is a sudden increase of interests in ideas and practice of self-management. It is therefore beyond any legitimate doubt that the Congress will contribute towards strengthening the reputation of our country in the international scene, and to further promoting the concept of self-management all over the world.*[13]

At party level, it was therefore decided to strengthen propaganda activities, involving leading news agencies, radio and periodicals (including *Tanjug*, *Radio Beograd* and *Međunarodna Politika*) coordinated by the Federal Secretary for Information.[14] Informative booklets on Yugoslavia's self-management were also published for foreign visitors and observers.[15]

Meanwhile, the deterioration of the internal situation in Yugoslavia, determined by ever growing strains between the federal centre and Croatia's independent course, strengthened the political dimension of the Sarajevo meeting. After April 1971, the Cabi-

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9 Avanti!, 22. 12. 1970: Cooperazione per la pace fra Italia e Jugoslavia. See also press cuttings in: FSSFT, Fondo Mario Zagari, serie 5: Affari Esteri, "Yougoslavie," 31–03–1973/09–10/1973.

10 See: ASSR, UA 372.

11 AJ, KPR, II-5-e-1, Informacija o dosadašnjim pripremama za drugi kongres samoupravljača Jugoslavije, Beograd, 8. 1. 1971, 3. The first Congress took place in 1950 to celebrate the launch of the new economic system.

12 AJ, KPR, II-5-e-1, Informacija o Prvoj tribini klubova samoupravljača Jugoslavije, 8. 1. 1971, 7.

13 AJ, KPR, II-5-e-1, Informacija o dosadašnjim pripremama za drugi kongres samoupravljača Jugoslavije, Beograd, 8. 1. 1971.

14 AJ, KPR, II-5-e-1, Informacija o izvršenju programa informativne aktivnosti prema inostranstvu povodom održavanja Kongresa samoupravljača, Beograd, 12. 4. 1971.

15 AJ, KPR, II-5-e-1, Odelenje za međunarodne odnose i veze predsedništva SKJ, Pov. Br. 2405/192, Beograd, 5. 4. 1971.

net of the Presidency of the Republic, headed by Marko Vrhunec, coordinated the public dimension of the event, keeping close contact with the Information Office of the SKJ 's Presidency, the Federal Secretariat for Information, the Alliance of Yugoslav Trade Unions, the *ad hoc* Office for the Preparation of the Congress and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As reported by Vrhunec, the major conclusion stemming from the internal debate among the above-mentioned bodies was that foreign observers would not be interested only in the self-management issue, but also in the country's broader political situation.[16]

Accordingly, the congress was designed to be a veritable show of Yugoslavia's system. Beyond the conspicuous presence of foreign journalists in Sarajevo (more than 110 – most of whom came from West Germany (21) and Italy (14)) and the presence of TV teams from Great Britain, Italy, Austria and West Germany, the number of foreign observers from all over the world (almost 200) indicated the success of the Yugoslav initiative.[17] A special information office was established in Sarajevo, to review and analyse the reception of the Congress abroad. Information reports from this office focused in particular on the Western European delegates. Particular attention was devoted to the Italian representatives. The Italian delegation was indeed one of the largest: it was made up of personalities coming from a broad spectrum of political and social organisations, including trade unions (CGIL – *Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro,* and CISL – *Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori*), progressive political parties (including the PSI and PCI) and Catholic associations (ACLI – *Associazioni Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani*) and, lastly, research centres (*Istituto Gramsci* and ISDEE – *Istituto di Studi e Documentazione sull'Est Europeo* in Trieste).[18] As regards the Italian leftist parties attending the works in Sarajevo, reports showed their great interest and conviction that the meeting would represent

> *a new page in the development of self-management. The Yugoslav experience is of fundamental importance for their work, and have therefore paid attention to the work of the* [Congress'] *Commissions, to listen to what workers think about problems and solutions in our country.*[19]

Such statements recurred frequently in the press analysis carried out by the propaganda office. Its last report concluded that, in line with the original goals of its organisers, the Congress had contributed towards shifting international attention from the political and economic crisis experienced by the federation to the re-launch of self-management as Yugoslavia's internal pillar.[20]

16 AJ, KPR, II-5-e-1, Beleška, Brioni, 27. 4. 1971.

17 AJ, KPR, II-5-e-1, II. kongres samoupravljača, Grupa za međunarodne aspekte, Bilten br.1, Sarajevo, 5. 5. 1971.

18 AJ, KPR, II-5-e-1, Lista inostranih posmatrača na II. kongresu samoupravljača Jugoslavije, Sarajevo, 5.–8. 5. 1971.

19 AJ, KPR, II-5-e-1, II. kongres samoupravljača, Grupa za međunarodne aspekte, Bilten br. 7, Sarajevo, 7. 5. 1971.

20 AJ, KPR, II-5-e-1, II. kongres samoupravljača, Grupa za međunarodne aspekte, Bilten br. 7, Sarajevo, 7. 5. 1971.

The Sarajevo Congress was indeed a stimulus for academic and intellectual debates on Yugoslavia's self-management, particularly in Western Europe. The SKJ's propaganda office continued to follow the evolution of these debates. In a December 1972 report, it concluded that opinions on Yugoslavia's experience oscillated between those who thought that self-management offered solutions to the problems of modern society, and those who believed that this system was "a good idea" which, however, could not work in Yugoslavia, for economic and political reasons. Faced with this polarisation, the propaganda office concluded that it was in the interests of the League to foster its external actions – particularly in Western Europe – to confirm the expansion of self-management as the basis of Yugoslavia's development and internal stability.[21] In Italy, this propaganda assumed an increasing political/diplomatic dimension, which was linked to the need to favour the development of bilateral relations between Rome and Belgrade. This is clearly shown by the attitude of the Italian ambassador to Belgrade, Giuseppe Walter Maccotta. In February 1972, during his first meeting with Stane Dolanc, Secretary of the Executive Bureau of the Presidency of the SKJ, Maccotta emphasised that the Yugoslav propaganda in Italy was still weak (*slaba*) and this affected the knowledge of Yugoslavia's peculiar road to socialism. Accordingly, Maccotta insisted on the need for the SKJ to strengthen its information activity in Italy.[22] As shown by recent research, the Italian diplomacy was not alone in considering the advantages stemming from the public rhetoric on self-management: this was, for example, the case of the Quai d'Orsay, which was aware that relations between Paris and Belgrade would benefit from the political/academic debate on self-management in France. A further example of the diplomatic dimension of self-management also concerned the visit of the President of the European Commission, the Dutch social-democrat Sicco Mansholt, to Belgrade in December 1972. In this circumstance, self-management was used by the Yugoslav representatives to insist on the effectiveness of their economic system, and as an axis of political convergence with Western European social democracy. What was at stake was the renewal of the 1970 trade agreement with the EEC, and the deepening of cooperation with the Community (Zaccaria, 2018a, 215–219).

AN INSTRUMENTAL ATTITUDE

The evolution of the self-management discourse in Italy until the mid-1970s bears witness to the convergence of Rome's and Belgrade's interests to improve the "image" of Yugoslavia in Italy. DC leaders insisted on the strategic importance of Yugoslavia's independence emphasising the "public" dimension of relations with Belgrade.[23] In December 1972, the *Centro per le relazioni italo-jugoslave* was established in Rome on the initiative of the DC foreign minister, Giuseppe Medici, to foster cultural and artistic cooperation beyond the diplomatic field.[24] At the same time, the PSI continued to stress self-management as Yugoslavia's distinc-

21 AJ, KPR, II-5-e-2-16, Predsedništvo SKJ, Odeljenje za političko-propagandno delovanje i informacije, Br. 13/1, 11. 1. 1972, 8.

22 AJ, 507/IX, Italija, K 12, Pov. br. 2405/59, Beograd, 10. 2. 1972, 17.

23 Il Popolo, 14. 2. 1973: Autogestione per il domani; MAESSD, Testi e documenti sulla politica estera dell'Italia, 1972, Discorso del ministro Moro a Trieste (22 aprile 1972), 265.

24 Il Popolo, 14. 2. 1973: Costituito il Centro per le relazioni italo-jugoslave (Roma, 12 dicembre 1972), 483.

tive feature through *Avanti!*.[25] At internal level, the socialists' stress on self-management was linked to competition with the PCI. As the latter condemned the socialists' participation in the centre-left coalition, arguing that the PSI was renouncing its genuine socialist goals for the sake of power-sharing with DC, Italian socialists needed an ideological reference point – in this case, self-management – to present themselves as genuine supporter of workers' requests to the leftist electorate (Salvadori, 2015; Vaccarini, 1981; Napolitano, 2008, 150–153). This domestic strategy was to linger until the end of the decade.[26]

After 1972, Yugoslavia's propaganda efforts were facilitated by the political *rapprochement* between the SKJ and PCI. For the Italian Communists, fostering political relations with the League – which represented an "heresy" in the international communist movement – was part of an overall strategy aimed at distinguishing itself from Soviet orthodoxy. This was one of the motives behind the "Eurocommunist" international strategy promoted by Enrico Berlinguer, Secretary-General of the party since 1972 (Pons, 2006). Also linked to Eurocommunism was the internal attitude of Berlinguer *vis-à-vis* cooperation with the DC and the search for a *compromesso storico* with the latter after 1973. This strategy required the development of "national solidarity" in foreign policy and, therefore, the PCI alignment with the opening of the main parties of the governing coalitions towards Belgrade, in view of the settlement of the border problem. And yet, beyond such internal and foreign policy considerations, the question of workers' participation exerted a notable fascination on Italian Communists, which went back to Antonio Gramsci's political thought (Napolitano, 2008, 150–153). Within the party, the public discourse on self-management took into consideration the Yugoslav "laboratory", as demonstrated by the publication in the party's leading periodical, *Rinascita*, of two long articles on the peculiarity of the Yugoslav economic system by Veljko Vlahović, a member of the Presidency of the SKJ, in February (Cavera, 2006, 42). It was *Rinascita* itself which, in a letter sent by its Director, Gerardo Chiaromonte, to Tito, had manifested the "enormous interest" shown by its readers in the role of the party in self-managed society.[27] In 1974, the official party publishing house, *Editori Riuniti*, issued a collection of articles and speeches delivered by Tito in the early 1970s – *Autogestione e socialismo* (Self-management and Socialism) – which followed the innovative course of Yugoslav socialism (Tito, 1974a). This book was the outcome of joint cooperation between the PCI and the Information and Propaganda office of the Presidency of the SKJ and showed Italian Communists' efforts at spreading knowledge of the Yugoslav system among their readers.[28] In the same year, *Editori Riuniti* also published Tito's opening speech at the Tenth Congress of the SKJ (May 1974), focused on Yugoslavia's labour-managed experience (Tito, 1974b).

As in the case of the DC and PSI, the Italian Communists' "admiration" for the Yugoslav system was based more on instrumental interest than the actual intention to develop

25 Avanti!, 26. 9. 1973: Belgrado conferma il non allineamento; Avanti!, 28. 5. 1974: Fermezza di Tito.

26 Avanti!, 20. 9. 1978: Autonomia e autogestione. Una proposta socialista alternativa allo Stato burocratico e accentratore.

27 AJ, 507/IX, Italija, K12, Rinascita, Roma, 27. 11. 1972, 96.

28 AJ, 507/IX, Italija, K 23, Pov. br. 1906/3376/1, Beograd, 10. 4. 1974.

Italian legislation in the field of workers' participation further. The *compromesso storico,* required a moderate and non-radical posture *vis-à-vis* the issues of social and industrial organisation, which was not to affect dialogue with Italian moderates (Mainardi & Ozella, 2009, 121–123). Accordingly, the PCI did not welcome the appeals for radical changes in industrial organisation voiced by radical workers' (*operaisti*) movements in previous years. No major public campaigns were carried out at national level to support workers' enhanced participation in enterprises, let alone their right to self-management. Beyond the need for dialogue with the DC moderate forces and the business world – which voiced its opposition towards any scheme of workers' participation[29] – the PCI was also aware of the peculiar position of Italian trade unions. The latter – *in primis* CGIL and CISL – interpreted their role according to an antagonistic logic, aiming at "external" control of the enterprise management. This is why the most important reform concerning industrial relations in Italy – the Workers' Statute – sanctioned the actual detachment of workers from the management of enterprises and reinforced the role of trade unions in the field of contractual bargaining (Giugni, 1986, 45–46).[30]

The attitude of the major Italian parties towards the Yugoslav system was therefore instrumental. Internally, it suited the domestic dialectic and was compatible with public debates on industrial democracy (which had developed since the late 1960s independently of the "Yugoslav question"), leaving discussions at an abstract level with no normative engagements. Internationally, it was in line with Italy's foreign policy goals in the Balkans. Amplifying Yugoslav propaganda, Italian political parties made a fundamental contribution to overcoming of the antagonistic rhetoric which had characterised the public discourse on Yugoslavia since the end of World War II. This was to facilitate the development of bilateral diplomatic relations with Belgrade. As territorial negotiations – and their economic clauses – were developed in secret, the public discourse on Yugoslavia was facilitated by the positive public outlook on the "self-management" laboratory.

Assessing the actual impact of Yugoslav propaganda and Italian reception without quantitative data or opinion polls is an impossible task. However, study of the contemporary press reveals that, when the Osimo agreements were signed in November 1975 – overcoming the border issue and providing for enhanced economic cooperation to link Yugoslavia to the Western European market – the public image of Yugoslavia in Italy was that of a reformist and innovative country. This view was conveyed by a broad spectrum of newspaper and periodicals from the moderate-conservative to the progressive political areas (Cavera, 2006, 40–44), with the notable exception of the parliamentary right and local opposition in the Trieste area (Monzali, 2015, 627–629). From an historical viewpoint, therefore, the instrumental convergence of Yugoslav and Italian interests in enhancing self-management propaganda had resulted in a mutual diplomatic advantage.

29 Partecipazione e democrazia industriale, 1977.

30 ASCGIL, Fondo Atti e Corrispondenza della Segreteria, b. 160, fasc. 160, Texte préparé par la Confédération Italienne des Syndicats Ouvriers pour la Table Ronde Syndicale Internationale: «Les syndicats et la Participation des Travailleurs à la prise de decision», Sarajevo, 10.–11. 5. 1971.

CONCLUSIONS

In the early 1970s, faced with mounting internal problems, the Yugoslav leadership used self-management as a propaganda tool to convey the image of a reformist and modernising country. This was functional to the external projection of the country's stability and reduction of international concerns about the future of the federation. Yugoslavia's self-management propaganda devoted special attention to Western Europe, Italy in particular. For Belgrade, the enhancement of political and economic relations with its EEC partners represented a political imperative even after the crisis of the liberal reforms of the 1960s. The opening towards Western Europe, however, needed renewed internal and external political legitimisation. The latter was found in the re-launch of the self-management discourse. Externally, this policy encroached on the development of debates on "industrial democracy" in Western Europe, which helped Yugoslavia's propaganda to find receptive grounds. Beyond analysis of the theoretical dimension and actual provisions of the self-management system – which was beyond the scope of this work – this article shows the instrumental nature of the self-management discourse. This was particularly the case of Italy, where the labour-managed system became a cheap political "card" to support Rome's *rapprochement* to Belgrade. The image of Yugoslavia as a "laboratory" of industrial democracy was recurrent in the public discourse of Italy's leading political parties, representing the core of the "public" dimension of Italian-Yugoslav relations. Analysis of Yugoslavia's self-management propaganda and its Italian reception has therefore shown that the discourse on "self-management" was artificially boosted for foreign policy goals.

Metaphorically, one could conclude that Yugoslavia and Italy found convergent reasons for "blowing up" the self-management bubble. This metaphor makes sense of the exponential rise of self-management as a fashionable political topic in the early and mid-1970s, and its consequent, gradual decline: the mounting crisis of the Yugoslav federation confined self-management to the theoretical sphere (a dimension which has traditionally characterised analysis on self-management in Yugoslavia).[31] In Italy, as in France and other Western European countries, the political discourse on the Yugoslav system underwent a rapid decline, which was observed by the same protagonists of the political-intellectual debates of the early 1970s (Georgi, 2003, 8). As a fragile, floating bubble, the public dimension of Yugoslavia's self-management was slowly yet inexorably swept away.

31 In this regard see: Estrin & Uvalić, 2008.

RAZBLINJENJE SAMOUPRAVNEGA MEHURČKA: RECEPCIJA JUGOSLOVANSKE PROPAGANDE V ITALIJI V ZAČETKU SEDEMDESETIH LET

Benedetto ZACCARIA

European University Institute, Department of History and Civilization,

Via Bolognese 156, 50139 Firenze, Italija

e-mail: benedetto.zaccaria@eui.eu

POVZETEK

Članek na podlagi primarnih virov iz Arhiva Jugoslavije in več italijanskih arhivov prikazuje, kako je jugoslovansko vodstvo, soočeno z resnimi notranjimi težavami, v začetku sedemdesetih let znova okrepilo propagando o samoupravljanju. S tem so jugoslovanski voditelji skušali Jugoslaviji povrniti podobo države, ki se reformira in modernizira, kar je služilo zunanji projekciji o stabilni državi in spodbujanju odnosov z zahodnoevropskimi partnerji, zlasti z Italijo. Članek je razdeljen na tri dele. V prvem delu ponovno ocenjuje zgodovinski razvoj italijansko-jugoslovanskih odnosov po drugi svetovni vojni s poudarkom na njihovih političnih omejitvah in povezanosti z jugoslovansko politiko do zahodne Evrope. Drugi del prikazuje, kako je notranja kriza, ki jo je jugoslovanska federacija doživljala v začetku sedemdesetih let, privedla do ponovnega odkritja propagande o samoupravljanju, pri čemer je posebna pozornost namenjena drugemu kongresu jugoslovanskih samoupravljavcev v Sarajevu maja 1971 in njegovim očitnim zunanjepolitičnim razsežnostim. Tretji del članka obravnava instrumentalno dimenzijo samoupravnega diskurza v Italiji do sredine sedemdesetih let.

Ključne besede: Jugoslavija, samoupravljanje, Italija, zahodna Evropa, Democrazia Cristiana, Partito Socialista Italiano, Partito Comunista Italiano

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CONSUMERS AND SELF-MANAGERS: CONSUMER PROTECTION AND ITS CHALLENGES DURING THE YUGOSLAV ECONOMIC CRISIS OF THE 1980S

Igor DUDA
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Faculty of Humanities,
Centre for Cultural and Historical Research of Socialism, Matetića Ronjgova 1, 52100 Pula, Croatia
e-mail: igor.duda@unipu.hr

ABSTRACT

In the 1970s, a new form of consumer protection system in socialist Yugoslavia was established, firmly grounded in the Constitution and the Associated Labour Act. Relying on the principles of self-management and withering away of the state, the principal role was given to consumer councils in local communities and municipalities, which negotiated with organizations of associated labour. Protection measures and functioning of the councils were coordinated by the bodies of the Socialist Alliance of the Working People. This paper is based on their documentation, especially from the 1980s, when economic crisis and shortages brought new issues in the focus of consumer councils.

Keywords: consumer protection, consumer councils, self-management, Socialist Alliance of the Working People, Yugoslavia, Croatia

CONSUMATORI E AUTOGESTORI: LA PROTEZIONE DEI CONSUMATORI E LE SUE SFIDE DURANTE LA CRISI ECONOMICA JUGOSLAVA DEGLI ANNI OTTANTA

SINTESI

Negli anni '70, si stabilì in Jugoslavia una nuova forma del sistema di protezione del consumatore, saldamente radicata nella Costituzione e nella Legge del Lavoro Associato. Partendo dai principi dell'autogestione e dell'estinzione dello Stato, il ruolo principale venne conferito ai Consigli dei Consumatori nelle comunità locali e nei comuni, i quali trattavano con le organizzazioni di lavoro associato. Le misure di protezione e il funzionamento dei consigli furono coordinati dagli organi dell'Alleanza Socialista del Popolo Lavoratore. Il presente contributo è basato sulla loro documentazione, particolarmente quella degli anni '80, quando la crisi economica e le carenze portarono all'attenzione dei consigli dei consumatori nuovi problemi.

Parole chiave: protezione dei consumatori, Consigli dei Consumatori, autogestione, Alleanza Socialista del Popolo Lavoratore, Jugoslavia, Croazia

INTRODUCTION

A measure that should be explored is a gradual switch to economic rent, and then investment of the surplus funds into apartment construction.[1] To prevent inefficient energy consumption, a new tariff system is introduced to discourage the use of electrical energy for heating apartments and offices, as such practice is considered "resource squandering" and failure to explore other energy resources.[2] In other domains as well "*the primary purpose of saving is not abstinence, but rather a rational and optimal satisfaction of human needs*".[3] Amidst meat and cattle food shortages, pigs leave for slaughterhouses ten kilograms lighter, poultry 30% lighter, and improved butter production is merely a result of reduced milk fat content.[4] Syndicate activists "*go around the countryside buying winter stores and boost their price*".[5] Driving schools demand uniform prices as these are now set at the municipal level.[6] Publishing houses and newspaper agencies are denied their request for significant increase of their prices, because even though this demand is in direct correlation with the rise in production costs, customers should not bear the burden alone.[7]

These are just some of the opinions, viewpoints and decisions the Consumer Council of the Republican Conference of the Socialist Alliance of the Working People of Croatia (SAWPC) dealt with directly, or through correspondence with other administrative bodies in the course of the seventies and the eighties. Council members also discussed the retail network situation, working hours, prices, the disposition of sales personnel, and various petty tricks played on customers (Duda, 2017). They were also concerned with the possibility of customers influencing production, trade and supply, water supply, as well as the state of the rest of the infrastructure, long lines in doctors' offices, and the availability of municipal services and offices. Nonetheless, among this myriad of mundane, practical and organizational difficulties, council members were also focused on essential questions of consumer rights protection in the context of self-managing socialism. The question they posed was whether protection was necessary in the first place, and who should be protecting whom, and from what or whom. Other concerns included how closely the socialist business moral principles are adhered to, what is the best way to approach the citizen's dual role of the provider and the beneficiary of the service, of the manufacturer and the consumer, and how to resolve this inner conflict and ambivalence in behaviour. The established protection system during the seventies was based on organizing consumer councils which were supposed to adhere to the existing model of self-management,

1 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1550, Društveni dogovor o ostvarivanju politike cijena u 1983., 7. 1. 1983.
2 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1548, Upit SIZ-a potrošača električne energije, 2. 12. 1985.
3 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.17, 1547, Smjernice programa rada, Nacrt, 10. 9. 1979.
4 HR-HDA, 1228, D-6578, Informacija o opskrbi tržišta osnovnim prehrambenim proizvodima, 24. 3. 1982.
5 HR-HDA, 1228, D-7152, Rezime sjednice Vijeća potrošača (VP), 20. 9. 1983.
6 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1550, Mišljenje u vezi primjene SAS o cijenama osposobljavanja vozača i ispita, 25. 3. 1983.
7 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1550, Republička zajednica za poslove cijena – mišljenja i informacije, 26. 4., 28. 4., 4. 5. 1983.

and thus actively engage in self-protection, and at the same time avoid boycotts, and open conflicts with those on the other side of the consumer chain since they were socialist citizens as well. This whole situation generated interesting inter-relations between self-managing at the workplace and self-managing at the place of dwelling, or, in other words, between the socialist citizen during working hours and during his or her leisure time.

These discussions took place in circumstances of an evolved consumer culture, and in an atmosphere which had been developing characteristics of a true consumer society (Duda, 2010; Patterson, 2011; Vučetić, 2012). Fast-paced socialist modernization trend and opening to western influences were conducive to a lifestyle which was in late seventies characterized by the height of purchasing power. The economic crisis of the eighties was therefore harder to bear, especially the sudden shortages at its very onset. All of these events reflected on the consumer protection system which had not been fully developed at the beginning of the eighties, but had a lot on its plate, nonetheless. The system was managed by the SAWP as an umbrella organization which, in this respect as well, called for responsible and cautious behaviour.

> *And all this in juxtaposition with the assumptions made by reactionary forces, and one part of the foreign press referring to Yugoslavia in the 'post-Tito' period. As always, facts speak otherwise. The optimism and the faith our people have in our future is unwavering. The outside pressure only adds to our uniqueness, and our troubles make us all the more powerful.*[8]

The analysis of consumer protection given in this paper is based precisely on the archive materials of the Socialist Alliance: the Croatian SAWP Republican Conference Consumer Council documents, the Council's correspondence with other administrative bodies, and the files contained in the archive collection of the Federal Conference of the SAWP of Yugoslavia. All these sources provide evidence of the painstaking efforts that went into overcoming the economic crisis of the 1980s, and of the awareness of the existing cracks through which it penetrated, revealing and further exacerbating a broader social crisis.

FROM FIRST CONSUMER COUNCILS TO CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTION

First steps of consumer protection in socialist Yugoslavia happened simultaneously with the introduction of workers self-management and workers councils in 1950 when first consumer councils (*savjet potrošača*) were founded.[9] The corner-stone of Yugoslav social reform and de-sovietisation policy, labelled by the slogan "factories to the workers", thus also became an impulse towards the awareness of consumer rights. In their first version, consumer councils were administrative bodies formed by municipal bo-

8 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1548, Vrijeme pune i kolektivne odgovornosti, Fronta, VII, 1–2 (48–49), 1980.

9 HR-HDA, 1228, D-4034, Sjednica Predsjedništva SSRNH, Magnetofonski zapisnik, 10. 3. 1977.

ards, they acted locally and were not interlinked (Tomac, 1977, 88). They monitored and criticized the state of commercial affairs, supervised craftsmen, tradesmen, prices and working hours, as well as prevented speculation in the years of rationing and scarcity (Hrženjak, 1974, 24). They were replaced by residential communities (*stambena zajednica*) in 1959, the same year when the specialized monthly gazette *Potrošački informator* (*Consumer Digest*) started to be issued in Belgrade and Zagreb. Its publisher was *Porodica i domaćinstvo* (*The Family and the Household*), later named as the Local Community and the Family Conference of Yugoslavia, an organization within the SAWP, whose secretary at the time was Robert Kramer, also the author of an early manual on consumer protection (Kramer & Josipović, 1967).

In the meantime, the 1963 Yugoslav Constitution established local communities (*mjesna zajednica*) as facultative smaller units within municipalities, and they were in charge of a new sort of consumer councils whose activities relied on social compacts (*društveni dogovor*) (Hrženjak, 1974, 63). Depending on different pace in establishing of local communities, the new system of consumer protection spread slowly across the country. The municipality of Osijek in east Croatia turned out to be particularly active, thus becoming a vanguard of consumer protection in Yugoslavia. The first social compact – a consumer code on water supply between the organization of associated labour (Organizacija udruženog rada – OAL) Vodovod and local communities – was signed here on 10 November 1970, the date which was later celebrated as the Yugoslav Consumer Day. Many other contracts followed, municipal Consumer Council members conducted visitations to OALs and often had excellent communication and cooperation.

For the system of organized consumers, a new basis was laid in the new Constitution of 1974 which, together with the Associated Labour Act of 1976, became a turning point for the development of consumer protection. The general view was that new regulations were "*the first instance ever that the position of the consumer was constitutionally regulated, anywhere in the world*".[10] Protection was defined as a right of consumer and as an obligation of the OAL. According to the Associated Labour Act, OALs were obliged to encourage customers to organized actions, keep track of their needs and make self-management agreements (*samoupravni sporazum*) regarding questions of supply, good customer service, pricing of products and services, as well as customers' share in revenues.[11] This was based on the federal and republican constitutions which two years earlier prescribed that OALs must cooperate and reach agreement with self-managing interest communities (*samoupravna interesna zajednica*), local communities and consumers on activities of common interest. It also defined consumer protection as a matter of common interest and necessity, and urged for synchronization of interests between the workers of OALs and citizens of local communities.[12]

10 HR-HDA, 1228, D-4748, XIV savjetovanje MZ Općine Vukovar, Usklađivanje interesa proizvođača i potrošača u sistemu socijalističkog samoupravljanja, 28. 10. 1978.

11 HR-HDA, 1228, D-4026, Sjednica VP, Prilog 1, Izvod iz zakona, 23. 2. 1977.

12 HR-HDA, 1228, D-6032, Položaj i uloga organiziranih potrošača i korisnika usluga, Izvodi iz propisa, 16. 2. 1981.

The fact that the Constitution turned local community (LC) into a mandatory self--management unit, made it an inevitable counterpart of basic organizations of associated labour (BOAL). Moreover, several federal and republican acts further defined the relations in the field of consumer protection, among them the law on basic business operation of OALs in the domain of goods and services trade, which obliged the OALs to clearly indicate the price, issue a receipt and to reach agreement on e.g. "*the establishment and location of the retail network* […], *scope, quantity, quality and price of consumption goods, working hours, and other issues and activities of common interest, and of course, supplying consumer goods to customers*".[13]

Consumer protection system created in the mid-1970s had its focus on the self-management area between the market and state. The first was not allowed to dominate over consumers, while the latter operated with its inspectorates, in consumer issues mainly with the market inspectorate, and was still forced to intervene in practice, although in theory it was supposed to wither away. The broad area in between was reserved for joint planning, self-management agreements and social compacts (consumer codes) reached by BOAL and LC, or by BOAL's consumer board and LC's consumer council. Third party could be the self-managing interest community (SMIC), specialized for a specific area of activities. The LC consumer council was actually the executive body of the local consumer assembly (*zbor*) which represented all consumers and service users of the LC. Different gatherings (*skup*) and referenda were also a possibility. The LC consumer council had its hierarchical counterparts on the level of municipality, municipal community (region) and the republic. They all functioned as bodies within SAWP and represented the organized consumers.

Croatian Consumer Council was a part of the Republican Conference of the SAWP of Croatia and, after initial meetings in 1974, held its constitutive session on 18 February 1975, a year after the new constitutions were passed by the federal and republican parliaments.[14] The Council members were representatives of the republican Secretariat for Industry, Commerce and Crafts, the Republican Conference of the SAWP, *Potrošački informator*, Women's Social Engagement Conference, the Alliance of Socialist Youth, Republican Market Inspection, the Council of Unions Confederation, Chamber of Economy, Institute of Economy, Industrial Design Centre, Radio Zagreb, nine regional representatives of municipal communities and a representative of the Consumer Council in Osijek. During the late 1970s they discussed theoretical and structural, as well as particular and practical issues, always with the focus on strengthening of the general awareness of consumer protection (Duda, 2017). Moreover, the republican Consumer Council coordinated the activities of municipal councils, and not many of them were able to compete with Osijek. In three years, by 1978, only 33 or less than a third of Croatian municipalities established their municipal consumer council within SAWP.[15] Therefore, the members of the republican Consu-

13 HR-HDA, 1228, D-4026, Sjednica VP, Prilog 1, Izvod iz zakona, 23. 2. 1977.

14 HR-HDA, 1228, D-3010, Sjednica VP, 18. 2. 1975.

15 HR-HDA, 1228, D-4635, Sjednica VP, Magnetofonski zapisnik, 29. 5. 1978.

mer Council could only conclude that "the fight for that citizen right has only just begun" and bitterly comment: "*We have a ton of declarations, legal regulations and firm stances, but we fail at enforcing any of that.*"[16]

CONSUMER PROTECTION IN THE TIME OF CRISIS

Consumer Council's agenda during the 1980s brought about new challenges and new practical issues. At the turn of the new decade, Yugoslavia was faced with the consequences of indebtedness and rising consumption trend of the seventies (Korošić, 1989; Sirotković, 1990; Duda, 2010). The costs of loans and interest rates went up, foreign currency was scarce, imports in decline, and goods which used to be regularly supplied now became difficult to obtain. Inflation rate soared, while the value of the dinar and average salary amount dropped, with a devastating effect on the standard of living. The integrity of the Yugoslav market was diminished, while grey economy started to expand. By mid-1980s, these problems were partly resolved by the long-term economic stabilization plan. Early on, the SAWP managed to detect some of the factors causing the crisis, and took steps to incite a change in behaviour:

> *Exuding this camaraderie, strength and pride, we have every right to be sensitive, and embittered to any glimpse of dissonance, lack of social responsibility, selfishness, and cowardice. Heroes are known in times of misfortune, but the weak and the cowardly just as well. As we once again become convinced of the strength and the unity of our community, we also recognize that which is dissonant, and at odds with the wide-ranging endeavour to bolster our economy, and initiate the process of its return to balance. Certain speculations present in particular regions, overindulgent purchasing of various goods and products, creating false shortages only to provoke higher prices, withdrawing domestic and foreign currency savings deposits from the banks, in addition to some other practices indicate that there are certain ill-intentioned forces out there, spreading rumours and falsehoods, attempting to create panic, and that there are those who fall victims of their deceit.*[17]

Under such circumstances, dubbed in the beginning as "market disorders", it was expected that "*the consumer council and the committee will be more than casual observers and instead act promptly*".[18] In Croatia, the SAWP Republican Conference Consumer Council considered their undertakings as conducive to stabilization: under a new slogan, "*fighting for quality, fighting for stable supply*", they continued to discuss "the business moral" and "socialist ethics", control system and inspections, price-quality ratio, and improving the quality of service, filling up the stocks in stores,

16 HR-HDA, 1228, D-4635, Sjednica VP, Magnetofonski zapisnik, 29. 5. 1978.

17 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1548, Vrijeme pune i kolektivne odgovornosti, Fronta, VII, 1–2 (48–49), 1980.

18 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1548, VP Karlovac, Plan rada 1980.

as well as the introduction of pre-packed meat and fruit, and automatic scales.[19] Several times a year, at their conference meetings, council members were informed about the sowing and harvesting seasons, the state of cattle industry and meat supply, price policies, winter stores, fire wood supply and other energy resources.[20] Also discussed were the prices of utilities, quality and selection of available products, the need for more stores in rural areas, the inefficiency and lack of consolidation within the existing trade network, improving eating habits of the entire population, and offering ready meals and ready-to-cook meals so as to bring food to the table of workers and their families more easily.[21] The Consumer Council was well acquainted with the conclusion drawn by the Croatian Parliament and other bodies on the situation in the trade sector where a small window of opportunity started to open for private entrepreneurs so as to improve the quality of supply, but with keeping a close eye on any attempts of unjustified amassing of wealth, and especially in those areas where circumstances did not allow for publicly owned stores to be opened.[22] Furthermore, the Council received reports on the operation of local consumer councils, which speak of, for example, difficulties in closing a self-management agreement with a trade sector in Rijeka, and putting into operation the SMIC there to handle supply, or the problem of the total lack of either any interest on any part, or adequate conditions to form a Consumer Council in Dubrovnik where, despite such unfavourable circumstances, agreements on self-management pertaining to working hours had been successfully closed.[23] However, there are also reports on agreements which were made only as a formality, and were never carried out in reality.[24]

A major point of interest for consumer councils in the first half of the 1980s were shortages which would occasionally gain some serious momentum, and in this way caused problems with the supply of certain products. In the late summer of 1983, for instance, meat was scarce, as well as detergents, household appliances, oil and oil derivatives (Duda, 2012), while at the same time the supply of oil, sugar, and medication took a turn for the better.[25] The winter-spring 1983/84 season was expected to bring about a shortage of potatoes, beans, onions, apples and grapes.[26] On occasion, the same period saw the

19 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1548, Bilješka sa sastanka na temu Aktivnosti na unapređenju kvalitete usluga i proizvoda kao doprinos ostvarivanja stabilizacije i izvoza, 14. 12. 1982; D-7004, Sjednica VP, 14. 1. 1983, Sažetak konstatacija, stavova i zaključaka.

20 HR-HDA, 1228, D-8033, Sjednica VP, 19. 2. 1985, Pregled sjednica.

21 HR-HDA, 1228, D-8033, Sjednica VP, 19. 2. 1985, Program aktivnosti u 1985., Rezime sjednice.

22 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1548, Zaključci (Analiza organiziranosti, funkcioniranja i ekonomskog položaja unutrašnje trgovine u SRH), 21. 3. 1985; Stavovi Akcione konferencije komunista trgovine u ostvarivanju DPES i idejno-političkih opredeljenja SKJ, 21.–22. 2. 1985.

23 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1548, Vijeće potrošača i korisnika usluga Rijeka, 9. 2. 1981; Vijeće potrošača Dubrovnik, 20. 2. 1981.

24 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1548, Aktivnost Socijalističkog Saveza na organiziranju i djelovanju potrošača, 14. 3. 1983.

25 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1549, Informacija sa sastanka o snabdevanju osnovnim prehrambenim proizvodima, lekovima i energijom, 21. 9. 1983.

26 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1550, Poslovna zajednica za voće, povrće i cvijeće, 18. 3. 1983.

problems with milk shortage, and the supply of medical equipment, but in case of many products, a viable short-term solution proved to be the activation of buffer stock, as was the case with wheat, or emergency imports of, for example, coffee.[27] To sum up, the conclusion was: "*insufficient amount of many products, narrow selection of products*".[28] This situation did not continue in the second half of the decade, with reports indicating adequate supply; however, this was achieved by timely imports of particular raw materials and products, for example, milk and coffee, as well as securing adequate foreign currency funds to finance such imports.[29]

Sometimes shortages were caused by the lack of foreign currency, and insufficient imports, sometimes by scarcity of imported raw material needed in domestic production, or inadequate domestic production, as well as by purposefully retaining the merchandise in storage to provoke price increase, or by households hoarding supplies. Therefore, apart from macroeconomic circumstances, the human factor also played a role through "*unprofessional business conduct, poor organization, and the fact that every employee should be focused on doing his part of the job, all the while respecting social compacts and self-management agreements*".[30] For this reason, the SAWP called for a higher degree of responsibility which was supposed to involve taking steps "*against disorder, false speculations, retaining or sending out the merchandise through unsupervised channels*", and against the negative psychological effects caused by frequent shortages, and the resulting need for hoarding.[31] The issues of supply and rising prices were the main reasons why the SAWP warned the Croatian government about the whole state of affairs, expressing "deep concern and dissatisfaction" they shared with the public.[32]

Buyers and distributors took advantage of this state of instability, "*riding the wave of poor organization or shortages*" and raising the prices, in response to which the consumers could do nothing but comply even when this meant settling for products and services of lower quality.[33] This type of illegal conduct was kept under the watchful eye of competent inspectorates; however, their authority did not receive adequate backup or support from consumers themselves.[34] In the latter half of the eighties, market inspectorate – underfinanced and underequipped as it still was – recorded nevertheless a steady rise

27 HR-HDA, 1228, D-7209, Sjednica VP, 17. 11. 1983, Sažetak Informacije o stanju opskrbljenosti tržišta poljoprivredno-prehrambenim i značajnim industrijskim proizvodima osobne potrošnje.

28 HR-HDA, 1228, D-7209, Sjednica VP, 17. 11. 1983, Sažetak Informacije o stanju opskrbljenosti tržišta poljoprivredno-prehrambenim i značajnim industrijskim proizvodima osobne potrošnje.

29 HR-HDA, 1228, D-9039, Sjednica VP, 26. 2. 1987, Osvrt na stanje i probleme opskrbljenosti nekim robama u 1987. (turistička sezona); D-9134, Sjednica VP, 18. 6. 1987, IVS, Informacija o opskrbi tržišta poljoprivredno-prehrambenim i značajnim industrijskim proizvodima osobne potrošnje.

30 AJ, 142, A-879, Zaključci jugoslovenskog radno-akcionog skupa Ekonomska stabilizacija i ostvarivanje ustavne koncepcije organizovanog delovanja potrošača.

31 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1548, Aktivnost Socijalističkog Saveza na organiziranju i djelovanju potrošača, 21. 2. 1983.

32 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1550, Predsjedništvo RK SSRNH IVS-u, 13. 1. 1988.

33 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1548, Aktivnost Socijalističkog Saveza na organiziranju i djelovanju potrošača, 14. 3. 1983.

34 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1548, Aktivnost Socijalističkog Saveza na organiziranju i djelovanju potrošača, 14. 3. 1983.

in the number of consumer reports, in addition to the usual complaints about "*prices not being clearly indicated, receipts not being issued, scale measurement frauds, overpricing, selling faulty and low quality merchandise*".[35] In 1986 and 1987, 359 market inspectors in Croatia conducted over 90 thousand inspections in a year, in sales and restaurant industries, and were reportedly coming across irregularities for which penalties were imposed.[36]

> *It is safe to say that violation of consumer rights has been gaining momentum and becoming increasingly wide-spread to the extent that it has become a serious social issue. The situation is all the graver if we consider the fact that the living standard of working people and citizens in general is already below the satisfactory level, and additional damage of this kind not only lowers this standard further, but also might cause serious and entirely justified discontent on their part.*[37]

Half of the samples collected during the meat inspection of 1989 did not meet the quality standards, and neither did one third of dairy products, worst of which turned out to be the priciest ones.[38] Following these findings, it was demanded that the severity of penalties be increased, and that legislative bodies handle the reported cases more promptly. However, local consumer councils very rarely submitted their reports to the public prosecution whose office hoped to see more initiative on their part, especially if taking into account how widespread frauds of this kind seemed to have been.[39]

According to Croatian republican and federal sources, by the end of the eighties, consumer organizations remained unsuccessful in achieving the desired impact. Despite the obvious need for legislative amendments in line with the growing importance of the role the market was playing, there clearly was a solid constitutional and legislative framework. Be that as it may, however, in 1985, one third of local communities in Yugoslavia did not have its consumer council.[40] Many existing councils operated without much success, while the Consumer Council Coordination Board, which operated under the Conference for the Development of Yugoslav Local Communities, made attempts to deal with different republican solutions on a federal level within the SAWP.

35 HR-HDA, 1228, D-9587, Sjednica VP, 12. 5. 1988, Izvještaj o stanju i funkcioniranju organa tržišne inspekcije u SR Hrvatskoj i o značajnijim pojavama u vršenju nadzora u 1987., 2. 1988.

36 HR-HDA, 1228, D-9587, Sjednica VP, 12. 5. 1988, Izvještaj o stanju i funkcioniranju organa tržišne inspekcije u SR Hrvatskoj i o značajnijim pojavama u vršenju nadzora u 1987., 2. 1988.

37 HR-HDA, 1228, D-10007, Sjednica VP, 23. 1. 1989, IVS, Informacija o negativnim pojavama u prometu robe i uslugama, 17. 12. 1988.

38 HR-HDA, 1228, D-10007, Sjednica VP, 23. 1. 1989, Kvaliteta prehrambenih proizvoda i zaštita potrošača, 11. 1988; D-10069, Sjednica VP, 17. 4. 1989, Zaključci, prijedlozi i preporuke Druge konferencije organiziranih potrošača Jugoslavije, Beograd, 17.–18. 3. 1989.

39 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1549, Saopštenje Saveznog javnog tužilaštva u vezi društvene akcije Potrošač i udruženi rad.

40 HR-HDA, 1228, D-8246, Sjednica VP, 25. 11. 1985, Prijedlog da Savezno vijeće Skupštine SFRJ bude sudionik u zaključivanju Društvenog dogovora o organiziranju i ostvarivanju prava i dužnosti potrošača i korisnika usluga, 1985.

> *However, organized action on the part of consumers has not achieved an adequate level of acknowledgement in reality, and consumer organizations have failed in achieving the impact they were, rightly so, expected to make. It is necessary to abandon the idea that the constitutional role of consumer organizations can be realized spontaneously, without continuous, active, and systematic engagement of social-political organizations and social community as a whole.*[41]

The SAWP was further displeased by the knowledge that such poor outcome is, in part, a result of political lack of interest for consumer protection, a matter which "*did not incite the federal authorities to take the necessary measures to contribute to the development and affirmation of this movement at its very inception, in addition to the fact that adequate material preconditions were also unmet*".[42] When referring to European consumer codes in order to provide an example, it was strongly emphasized that "*there is no economically developed country whose government and parliament did not ensure firm material grounds for active engagement of consumer organizations*", while the Yugoslav state authorities "*lose track of what their own role and responsibilities are*".[43] This is what the atmosphere was like during the last two years of socialism when the number of consumer councils was growing, but the matter of creating a unified network was still in the limelight, as well as the subject of a greater level of self-managing workers' and internal OAL control. After about fifteen years of building the protection system, concluding that the proscribed cooperation between consumer councils and BOALs is fruitless seemed very dramatic.[44] Some new developments did, however, take place. First annual Consumer Conferences were organized, and efforts were made to establish consumer associations, and the Croatian Consumer Centre. March of 1988 was proclaimed the first Yugoslav Consumer Month, and on 15th March, the World Consumer Right Day was observed for the very first time.[45] In 1989, the Yugoslav Consumer Council Coordination Board, together with the publisher Porodica i domaćinstvo (Family and Household), began publishing *YU-Potrošač* (YU-Consumer) magazine. As a result of reorganization, consumer councils became permanent bodies with the Council for Initiatives, Programmes and Projects in the domain of socialist social-economic relations, and the same approach was to be applied on all SAWP levels – while it was still in existence.[46] Based on experience thus

41 HR-HDA, 1228, D-8246, Sjednica VP, 25. 11. 1985, Prijedlog da Savezno vijeće Skupštine SFRJ bude sudionik u zaključivanju Društvenog dogovora o organiziranju i ostvarivanju prava i dužnosti potrošača i korisnika usluga, 1985.

42 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1549, Najava sastanka na temu Uloga i organizovanje potrošača u sistemu socijalističkog samoupravljanja, 5. 1. 1987.

43 HR-HDA, 1228, D-10069, Sjednica VP, 17. 4. 1989, Zaključci, prijedlozi i preporuke Druge konferencije organiziranih potrošača Jugoslavije, Beograd, 17.–18. 3. 1989.

44 HR-HDA, 1228, D-10007, Sjednica VP, 23. 1. 1989, IVS, Informacija o negativnim pojavama u prometu robe i uslugama, 17. 12. 1988.

45 HR-HDA, 1228, D-9521, Sjednica VP, 10. 2. 1988, Rezime; D-9193, Sjednica VP, 12. 10. 1987, Mjesec potrošača; 1548, Program rada Vijeća potrošača u 1989. (Prijedlog).

46 HR-HDA, 1228, D-10069, Sjednica VP, 17. 4. 1989, Rezime; 1548, Dopis konferencijama SSRNH, 9. 10. 1989.

far, members of the new consumer councils were to be appointed "*on account of their interests, predilections, competencies, and willingness to get engaged*", as opposed to previous practices to select members "*based on a particular set of formalities*".[47]

THE CONSUMER AND ASSOCIATED LABOUR PROJECT

A rather comprehensive document titled *Okvirni program dugoročne društvene akcije Potrošač i udruženi rad* (*Framework programme for the Consumer and Associated Labour long-term project*) serves as an excellent catalogue of planned measures and improvements, and as such provides indirectly a very illustrative overview of the consumer protection situation during the eighties. The programme was finalized after several months of meetings and debates on the Yugoslav level, the most critical of which was the counselling which took place in Osijek in February of 1983 organized under the title *Ekonomska stabilizacija i ostvarivanje ustavne koncepcije organiziranog djelovanja potrošača* (*Economic stabilization and realization of the constitutional concept of organized consumer engagement*). This was a project established within the *SAWP programme of activities aimed at social and economic stabilization,* but it is also found in the basis of other important documents: the Constitution, Associated Labour Act, assembly resolutions, and *Polazne osnove dugoročnog programa ekonomske stabilizacije* (*Long-term economic stabilization programme foundations*).[48] The main goal was to engage municipalities, social-political organizations, academic institutions and the media in making the constitutional concept of consumer protection a reality, as well as self-management in consumer organization which would protect them from administration, and the market having the upper hand over them. This programme also put forth the idea that by bringing together self-management at the workplace and self-management at home "*every worker-manufacturer would be invested in his production process as if he was doing it for himself*", and this would ensure a better quality of products and services.

The preparations for this project began in July of 1982 in response to initiatives on behalf of the SAWP Osijek Municipal Conference, the Croatian SAWP Republican Conference Consumer Council, Local Communities and Families of Yugoslavia Conference, Yugoslav Trade Unions Council, Yugoslav Chamber of Commerce, and other institutions. The organization board operated under the jurisdiction of the SAWP Federal Conference. The aim was to "*open the path to direct cooperation, agreement and joint planning between work collectives and organized consumers and initiate new developments through long-term collective projects*".[49] At meetings that took place in the period until December

47 HR-HDA, 1228, D-10069, Sjednica VP, 17. 4. 1989, Zaključci, prijedlozi i preporuke Druge konferencije organiziranih potrošača Jugoslavije, Beograd, 17.–18. 3. 1989.

48 AJ, 142, A-879, Prepiska i materijali odbora o društvenoj akciji Potrošač i udruženi rad, Okvirni program dugoročne društvene akcije Potrošač i udruženi rad, M(j)esna zajednica, XXV, 4, 1983.

49 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.8.11, Koordinacijski odbor za mjesne zajednice, 487, Informacija o pripremama za održavanje jugoslavenskog radno-akcionog skupa na temu Ekonomska stabilizacija i ostvarivanje ustavne koncepcije organiziranog djelovanja potrošača i organiziranju dugoročne opće jugoslavenske društvene akcije Potrošač i udruženi rad, 10. 12. 1982.

that year, as many as 30 institutions joined in, and about 15 work groups were established. Also, pilot programmes were created to be carried out on an experimental basis in about 20 municipalities: Osijek, Vukovar, Rijeka, Karlovac, Split and Zagreb in Croatia, Ljubljana and Maribor in Slovenia, Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Tuzla in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Titograd in Montenegro, Beograd, Niš, Novi Sad and Priština in Serbia, and Skopje, Bitola and Gostivar in Macedonia.[50] Later on, Celje and Koper in Slovenia also joined in, as well as Opatija and Pula in Croatia (where Split stepped down), and Zenica in Bosnia and Herzegovina.[51] Pilot programmes were focused on a specific issue deemed important for a particular municipality, so Split, for example, was initially in charge of consumer activities aimed at improvement of the fishing industry and Mediterranean agricultural products. Such an extensive initiative demanded extraordinary engagement, so many common activities were connected and adapted to its programme and dynamics.[52]

The opening statement at the Osijek counselling session was held by Marjan Rožič, a Slovenian politician from the highest ranks of the Yugoslav SAWP, who acted at this event as a representative of the *Consumer and Associared Labour* project organization board.[53] This was indeed a very sobering introduction to a two-day discussion that followed. Rožič stated that reasons why the expansion of consumer councils had been so "slow and inconsistent" – around 9,000 councils spread across 14,000 local communities, and 150 municipal councils in 500 municipalities – was a lack of understanding and insight, and moreover, that even in localities where they were established, their efforts were concentrated solely on the trade sector. He, therefore, appealed for respect and consistent application of the existing protection mechanisms, stronger engagement on the part of the Yugoslav SAWP, more effective operation within local communities, and harmonization of legislative measures. He criticised services responsible for supply for their lack of organization, but added that consumers also contributed to a negative atmosphere which in turn created "a vicious circle" as the market became open to speculation, "trust is lost", and all parties involved "*focus on what others are supposed to be doing only to justify their own failure to act appropriately*". He advocated the implementation of self-management based solutions, and denounced state interventions:

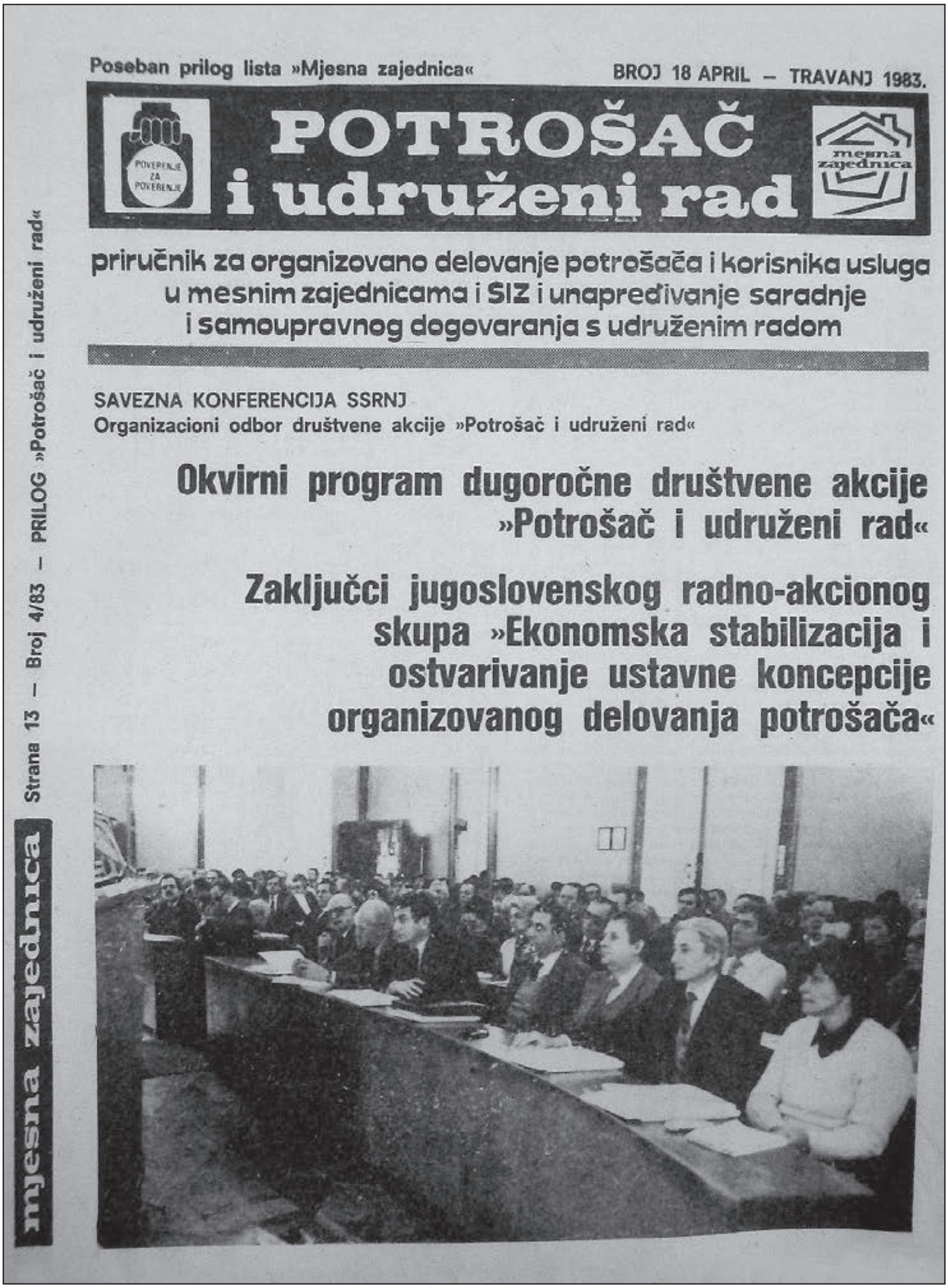
> *Only well-organized working people can successfully resolve particular issues and problems, and in this way contribute to further social-economic development based on the principles of self-management in the context of realizing the long-*

50 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.8.11, Koordinacijski odbor za mjesne zajednice, 487, Informacija o pripremama za održavanje jugoslavenskog radno-akcionog skupa na temu Ekonomska stabilizacija i ostvarivanje ustavne koncepcije organiziranog djelovanja potrošača i organiziranju dugoročne opće jugoslavenske društvene akcije Potrošač i udruženi rad, 10. 12. 1982.

51 AJ, 142, A-879, Prepiska i materijali odbora o društvenoj akciji Potrošač i udruženi rad, Popis adresa.

52 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1548, Bilješka sa sastanka na temu Aktivnosti na unapređenju kvalitete usluga i proizvoda kao doprinos ostvarivanja stabilizacije i izvoza, 14. 12. 1982.

53 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1549, Uvodno izlaganje (koncept) Dr. Marjana Rožiča na savetovanju Potrošači i udruženi rad, Osijek, 25. 2. 1983.



Poseban prilog lista »Mjesna zajednica« BROJ 18 APRIL – TRAVANJ 1983.

POVERENJE ZA POVERENJE

POTROŠAČ i udruženi rad

mesna zajednica

priručnik za organizovano delovanje potrošača i korisnika usluga u mesnim zajednicama i SIZ i unapređivanje saradnje i samoupravnog dogovaranja s udruženim radom

SAVEZNA KONFERENCIJA SSRNJ
Organizacioni odbor društvene akcije »Potrošač i udruženi rad«

Okvirni program dugoročne društvene akcije »Potrošač i udruženi rad«

Zaključci jugoslovenskog radno-akcionog skupa »Ekonomska stabilizacija i ostvarivanje ustavne koncepcije organizovanog delovanja potrošača«

mjesna zajednica Strana 13 – Broj 4/83 – PRILOG »Potrošač i udruženi rad«

Fig. 1: Potrošač i udruženi rad [Consumer and Associated Labour], a section of the paper Mjesna zajednica [Local Community], XXV, 4, 1983.

> *term stabilization programme.* […] *Furthermore, these efforts have to be based on a class principle, so that working people in the capacity of manufacturers and consumers become aware of themselves, and the true nature of their own position in the current phase of operation of the social-economic, and political system, and that they rely less on administration which, when it comes to irregularities in production and the market, normally seeks a way out through some new, mostly administrative, measures.*[54]

The programme agreed upon in Osijek contained, for the most part, a lengthy list of 33 tasks, each with additional remarks.[55] Many of these were already familiar, but there were also some very innovative ones which had not been mentioned before in written form. First and foremost, the constitutional concept of free exchange of labour and self-management interest-based organization, while existing negative traits were once again brought in correlation with "deviations" in its application. Therefore, it was necessary to improve the implementation of social compacts and self-management agreements, and push forward the establishment of consumer councils in local communities, as well as councils of services users in SMICs covering social services, economic infrastructure, communal affairs and housing. Initiative was launched to restore consumer co-operatives, and the establishment of credit unions. Consumer mediation proceedings could in future be set to motion to settle out of court the disputes between BOALs and consumers in the same way the existing peace councils had been doing. It was also considered that consumers should participate in planning operations within SMICs, in income realized by a BOAL, and in dealings undertaken by communities of pricing affairs. BOALs would be stripped of any funds acquired at the expense of consumers, and these would be used instead as means of financing protection mechanisms and improving the quality of goods and services. One very pragmatic measure implied awarding consumers the right to participate in final construction works in apartment buildings which would give them not only a chance to add changes according to their own needs and tastes, but also the right to buy a socially-owned apartment which would yield additional finances that would be further invested in building new apartments. There was plenty of vacant space within apartment buildings which could be awarded to owners of small businesses, for instance household appliance repair shops. Furthermore, communication between citizens and municipal authorities was to be regulated by a self-management agreement in order to prevent "delays and inefficiency", clerks' unprofessional conduct, and disrespect toward the citizens, or sending them off to roam from one office to another. Consumers were to be duly informed of their rights via special newspaper sections, specialized journals, and booklets, counselling offices, and trained activists.

54 HR-HDA, 1228, 5.2.19.18, 1549, Uvodno izlaganje (koncept) Dr Marjana Rožiča na savetovanju Potrošači i udruženi rad, Osijek, 25. 2. 1983.

55 AJ 142, A-879, Okvirni program dugoročne društvene akcije Potrošač i udruženi rad, M(j)esna zajednica, XXV, 4, 1983.

Another pillar bolstering the rise of consumer culture was advertising industry, but only by giving honest information, rather than broadcasting messages aimed at manipulating consumer behaviour. Moreover, the media could help in promoting the need to conserve energy and collect secondary raw materials.

Another novelty was the possibility of establishing a consumer council within the domain of hospitality services, meaning, in bars, restaurants and hotels. In this way patrons and tourists would in effect become self-managing parties, primarily by observing and commenting the quality of service and prices by filling out questionnaires. Regarding the domain of hospitality services, it was proposed that more self-service restaurants be opened, and taverns which would be serving meals the selection and pricing of which would be suitable for the needs of working people. Similarly, it was also proposed that small hotels and guesthouses offering accommodation at affordable prices be established. Facilities of this kind would complement the existing social tourism infrastructure, and mess halls for workers. It was recommended that menus of these working people restaurants include special diet meals, hire experts in nutrition and diet, and invest in promotion of healthy eating. This would be to the benefit of the population that had apparently been consuming one third of food over what is considered necessary by medical standards, especially when it came to bread, fats, sugar and meat. Fruits and vegetables were to become more easily accessible by introducing the "garden for everyone" initiative which was aimed at offering the entire population a chance to grow their own food in exchange for a small fee (or none) for lot exploitation.

In order to ensure a regular supply of agricultural foodstuff, it was planned to increase production, and careful recording of annual requirements, in addition to establishing SMIC organizations for supply, and contingency stock in every municipality. Municipal supply coupons served merely to conceal the terrible lack of organization and were as such a practice that should be abolished, together with everything else that stirred up chaos, diminished citizens' trust, and created an impression that social compacts and self-management agreements were useless. It was believed that trade business should be operating on the principle that better sales means lower prices which in turn means better revenues. Municipalities and republics should endorse the open market, and even invest in building big shopping centres which would prevent the creation of monopoles. Consumers were definitely to have a say in matters regarding the imports of merchandise, possibly even by being given samples on display, but the main goal was to avoid imports of low-quality and outdated products.

On the other hand, domestic products were to be given an incentive by way of "economic patriotism" measures, promotion of the slogan "*domestic quality is the best quality*", and by applying the Yugoslav mark of quality label (Yugoslav standard – JUS). More successful salesmen guaranteed the quality of their merchandise by earning a label with the words: "*Consumer code signatory – trust for trust*". One of the remarks made in the programme is that product design should be improved, and that "*design for regular people*" should be promoted, such that "*it encourages creative endeavours, the cult of labour, culture of production and consumption which is befitting the humanist traits of our society*". A good example of this are remarks made about the furniture

which was said to be "*heavy, robust and not functional enough*", it fit neither the size of an average apartment, nor an average family budget, and was to be replaced with "*a simpler, well designed pieces which better meet the standards of quality and functionality*". The programme also criticized the assortment of children's clothing and footwear, poor choice of material and colour, insufficient quality and functionality, all of which was to be dealt with by extending the production to household premises.

In the months following the Osijek conference, work groups were assembled (for example, teams for socialist self-management moral, and good business practices, for savings in the field of consumption, or those in charge of advancement of the retail and open market), whose members were mainly experts from Belgrade and Zagreb. Also underway were preparations to publish manuals, and inform the SAWP branches, and several government bodies, such as the Federal Secretariat for the Market and General Economic Affairs, Market Research Institute, Professional Organization of Yugoslav Department Stores, and Industrial Design Centre.[56] All parties that had some stake in the matter were invited to work together, and give their contribution to this cause, keeping in mind that the programme agenda was to be taken as a set of guidelines which allowed everyone to demonstrate creativity, and independence in the fieldwork. The Croatian SAWP Republican Conference Presidency, as one of the bodies which launched this initiative, was thanked by the organization board, and was asked to continue the cooperation, while Osijek enthusiasts, in addition to commendation and expression of gratitude, were also asked to stay strong, and persistent in their efforts, and to continue setting example for other municipalities.[57]

The conclusion made after the counselling session was that this was only the first conference in the series of biannual Consumer and Associated Labour conferences.[58] Two years later, outcomes of actions undertaken in Croatia were evaluated. Consumer councils' assessment was that the "*programme had on the whole been slow in realization*", and that significant improvements in terms of quality of products and services could be observed only in Rijeka Municipal Community (region of Istria, Kvarner, Hrvatsko primorje and Gorski kotar), which "*is inconsequential considering the failure to expand this type of action to a republican level*".[59] Formally, this initiative still received a lot of attention, and unfulfilled tasks were moved to the following year. Thus, work groups and municipalities were expected to deal with consumer organization in local communities and municipalities in 1985, as well as with informing the consumers, and the quality of food products.[60] The last four-year Consumer and Associated Labour action programme was planned to last from 1988 to 1992, exceeding the duration of political circumstances that would allow its application.

56 AJ, 142, A-879, Spisak organizacija i institucija kojima se upućuje pismo Organizacionog odbora.

57 AJ, 142, A-879, Organizacioni odbor, Predsjedništvu RK SSRNH Zagreb, 11. 10. 1983; Predsjedništvu OK SSRNH Osijek, 11. 10. 1983.

58 AJ, 142, A-879, Zaključci jugoslovenskog radno-akcionog skupa Ekonomska stabilizacija i ostvarivanje ustavne koncepcije organizovanog delovanja potrošača.

59 HR-HDA, 1228, D-8215, Sjednica VP, 10. 10. 1985, Potrošač i udruženi rad.

60 HR-HDA, 1228, D-8033, Sjednica VP, 19. 2. 1985, Informacija – pregled realizacije programa rada u 1984.

In 1989 however, it was renamed as *Potrošač i tržište* (Consumer and the Market), which turned out to be much more than just a symbolic change.[61]

CONCLUSION: UNEXPLORED POSSIBILITIES

In its latter stage, Yugoslav socialism attempted to encourage citizens to active participation in their places of dwelling and turn them into active self-managers by establishing consumer councils. The goal was to reduce the level of state influence, and the need for intervention and supervision of its inspectorates. This vacant position was then supposed to be filled by socialist citizens working together in various capacities: as manufacturers and consumers, salesmen and customers, providers and users of utility and other services. Self-management agreements and social compacts were a consequence of joint efforts of consumer councils, BOALs and SMICs, and acknowledgment of their undertakings was a sign that theory works in practice. This would imply that an active consumer did not depend on the state, but pursued his satisfaction and rights on his own, investing his own efforts within a harmoniously functioning community, and within the framework of self--management and associated labour:

> *Personal happiness cannot be brought about by the state, or the system, or a political party. A man can achieve his personal happiness only by his own accord; however, not as a separate individual, but only by taking part in equal relationship with people around him* (Kardelj, 1978, 14).

Nevertheless, numerous SAWP documents on the subject of consumer protection in fact reveal a system which was supposed to be established, but in reality – despite a huge amount of effort, good will, and some success – very often proved to be non-existent. Ideas that came from above failed to meet on the other side with a sufficient amount of interest, willingness, or minimum conditions for realization, so taken literally, self-management could, on the grassroots level, really be understood as someone perceiving consumer protection as something unnecessary, and that a local consumer council needn't be established, and that such course of action would go unpunished. In this context, infrequent use of book of complaints in trade and hospitality business could imply that consumers had not been motivated enough, that they did not believe their complaint could change something, or that the service was in fact satisfactory. Lack of motivation for saving electrical energy during the years of reductions speaks, on the other hand, of the lack of responsibility for the community, and of the low level of awareness, the consequence of which is the attitude that one light bulb more or less makes no difference whatsoever.

The state was the culprit for frequent shortages, the very same state that wished to withdraw from society; however, by causing disorder on the market during the years

61 HR-HDA, 1228, D-10069, Sjednica VP, 17. 4. 1989, Zaključci, prijedlozi i preporuke Druge konferencije organiziranih potrošača Jugoslavije, Beograd, 17.–18. 3. 1989.

of crisis, it managed in fact to complicate daily living, as well as the relationship between consumer councils and OALs. By promoting self-protection, it also called for self-deprivation. At the same time, the SAWP criticized the state for the lack of investment in the consumer council network. Therefore, the period of the eighties is not only a time of internal conflict felt by every socialist citizen on whose resolution depended the success of the envisioned consumer protection system, but also a time of conflict between state intervention and its withering away. The intention was to equip the citizens with means to protect themselves in their various capacities without entering into conflict. This indeed happened, but not always in the way it was intended to happen, but often in informal, even illicit relationships. It seems that when it comes to consumer protection, self-managing organization implied tolerating a state of what might be considered an accidental lack of organization, or purposeful flexibility. In any case, many possibilities remained unexplored in the huge gap between the individual, the social and the state.

POTROŠNIKI IN SAMOUPRAVLJALCI: VARSTVO POTROŠNIKOV IN NJEGOVI IZZIVI V ČASU JUGOSLOVANSKE GOSPODARSKE KRIZE V OSEMDESETIH LETIH

Igor DUDA

Sveučilište Jurja Dobrile u Puli, Filozofski fakultet, Matetića Ronjgova 1, 52100 Pula, Hrvaška

e-mail: igor.duda@unipu.hr

POVZETEK

Po prvih poskusih v petdesetih in šestdesetih letih, je bil v sedemdesetih letih v socialistični Jugoslaviji končno vzpostavljen sistem varstva potrošnikov, trdno zasidran v ustavi in Zakonu o združenem delu. Izhajajoč iz načel samoupravljanja, je bila vodilna vloga dodeljena svetom potrošnikov v lokalnih skupnostih in občinah, ki so se tako povezale z organizacijami združenega dela v procesu sprejemanja samoupravnih sporazumov in družbenih dogovorov. Glavni namen je bil omejiti vmešavanje države in njenih inšpektoratov ter tako ustvariti prostor za delovanje, ki je izhajalo iz sodelovanja socialističnih državljanov v njihovih različnih vlogah: proizvajalci in potrošniki, prodajalci in kupci, ponudniki in uporabniki komunalnih in drugih storitev. Varstvene ukrepe so sveti potrošnikov usklajevali z republiško in zvezno konferenco Socialistične zveze delovnega ljudstva, ki sta tudi komunicirali s pristojnimi državnimi organi. Ta članek temelji na njunih arhivskih dokumentih. Toda proces ustanavljanja lokalnih svetov potrošnikov je tekel zelo počasi in se marsikje ni zgodil pred začetkom osemdesetih let, ko sta gospodarska kriza in z njo povezano pomanjkanje postala že očitna. Sveti potrošnikov so prispevali k reševanju problemov z redno preskrbo, na zvezni ravni pa so sodelovali tudi pri projektu Potrošnik in združeno delo, s katerim so skušali spodbuditi razvoj varstva potrošnikov, racionalno rabo virov ter izboljšanje in doslednejše upoštevanje zakonskih rešitev.

Ključne besede: varstvo potrošnikov, sveti potrošnikov, samoupravljanje, Socialistična zveza delovnega ljudstva, Jugoslavija, Hrvaška

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1968: THE YUGOSLAV SELF-MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AT THE CROSS-ROADS: A "CONCRETE UTOPIA" REVISITED IN 2018

Catherine SAMARY
Université Paris-Dauphine, Place du Maréchal de Lattre de Tassigny, 75775 Paris, France
International Institute of Research and Education (IIRE), Lombokstraat 40, 1094 Amsterdam, Netherland
e-mail: samarycatherine@yahoo.fr

ABSTRACT

*This revisiting of the Yugoslav experience uses concepts of "concrete utopia" and socialism as a conflictive "transitional society" that I first specify and which I share with Darko Suvin (*Splendour, Misery and Possibilities. An X-Ray of Socialist Yugoslavia. *Chicago, Haymarket Books, 2018). Through this lens, I present my interpretation of the driving force of main changes as internal with no predetermined future within conflictive internal and international relations: the emancipatory "triple struggle" or "revolutionary contract" expressed in the founding moments of Tito's Yugoslavia gave it the popular legitimacy (and therefore the strength) to invent an autonomous "road" to socialism resisting both capitalist neo-colonial domination and Stalin's diktats. My thesis is that in the context of the 1960s the status of self-managers recognized to Yugoslav workers had acquired a profound legitimacy associated with more experiences and freedom of criticism than anywhere else, in spite of and within single party rule. Therefore, despite serious Achilles' heels of the system, among them the lack of any clear concept of political economy adequate to self-management, dominant social and intellectual movements could still express the will to reduce the gap between socialist goals and negative effects of reforms – and find significant support within the system. I present the "June 1968" movement as a climax in the expression of such a socialist "concrete utopia" in favor of a self-managed democratic system conflicting with other internal dynamics. I interpret the unknown Autumn 1968 of Workers Councils in Czechoslovakia as concrete evidence of possible extension of what was not and could not be only a "Yugoslav" road to Socialism.*

Keywords: concrete utopia, Ernst Bloch, Darko Suvin, Tito's Yugoslavia, self-management, market reform, June 1968, Praxis

1968: IL SISTEMA DI AUTOGESTIONE JUGOSLAVO A UN BIVIO: UN'"UTOPIA CONCRETA" RIVISITATA NEL 2018

SINTESI

La rilettura dell'esperienza jugoslava utilizza i concetti dell'"utopia concreta" e del socialismo come "società di transizione" conflittuale che intendo inizialmente specifica-

*re nell'articolo e che condivido con Darko Suvin (*Splendour, Misery and Possibilities. An X-Ray of Socialist Yugoslavia*. Chicago, Haymarket Books, 2018). Attraverso questa lente presenterò la mia interpretazione della forza propulsiva dei principali cambiamenti interni senza un futuro prestabilito nell'insieme delle relazioni conflittuali interne e internazionali: la "triplice lotta" emancipatrice o il "contratto rivoluzionario" che vennero espressi nei momenti costitutivi della Jugoslavia di Tito, ebbero la loro legittimità popolare (e quindi la forza) per inventarsi una "via" autonoma verso il socialismo resistendo sia al dominio capitalista neo-coloniale come pure ai diktat di Stalin. La mia tesi è che nel contesto degli anni '60, lo status dell'autogestione riconosciuto ai lavoratori jugoslavi aveva acquisito una profonda legittimità associata a molte più esperienze e libertà di critica che altrove, nonostante il sistema venisse retto da un unico partito. Pertanto, nonostante seri talloni d'Achille, tra cui la mancanza di un chiaro concetto di economia politica adeguato all'autogestione, i movimenti sociali e quelli intellettuali dominanti potrebbero ancora esprimere la volontà di ridurre il divario tra gli obiettivi socialisti e gli effetti negativi delle riforme – e trovare un sostegno significativo all'interno del sistema. Nell'articolo presento il movimento "Giugno 1968" come il culmine dell'espressione di una tale "utopia concreta" in favore di un sistema democratico autogestito in conflitto con altre dinamiche interne. Interpreto anche lo sconosciuto "Autunno 1968" dei Consigli dei Lavoratori in Cecoslovacchia come prova concreta della possibile estensione di quello che non era stato e non poteva essere solo una strada "jugoslava" verso il socialismo.*

Parole chiave: utopia concreta, Ernst Bloch, Darko Suvin, Jugoslavia di Tito, autogestione, riforma del mercato, Giugno 1968, Praxis

INTRODUCTION: FROM "CONCRETE UTOPIA" TO THE "SOCIALIST TRANSITION"

My revisiting of the Yugoslav socialist experience uses Ernst Bloch's concept of "concrete utopia" that I will first specify. That will allow me to highlight the way I use another concept – "socialism" – as a "transitional society" between capitalism and communism, linked to the emergence of "concrete utopias" within "a field of forces polarized between a congeries of class society alienations and communist disalienation, connoting dynamic and fierce contradictions on all levels" (Suvin, 2018, 17). I will then present my interpretation of the 1960s at the "cross-roads" of alternative possibilities, among them the "concrete utopia" expressed by the June 1968 movement with universal dimensions.

As the German non-orthodox Marxist philosopher Ernst Bloch[1] would tell us, "*thinking means venturing beyond. But in such a way that what already exists is not kept under or skated over*" (Bloch, 1954). Bloch's approach of hope is associated with the notion of "concrete utopia", involving a dialectical interaction between human beings driven on by their hunger or suffering and their dreams of overcoming this, with no guarantee of success. In this approach, reality "in-the-being" might be said to include not only what is, but also what might be: alternative real possibilities always lie on the horizon ahead; they may be fought for as "concrete utopias" – in contrast to the merely fantastical "abstract utopias" of compensatory wishful thinking. Such "concrete utopias" are not the implementation of a pre-existing "model" or knowledge – even if different kinds of knowledge can nurture them and be enriched through experiences. Their "utopian" dimension does not mean that they are "impossible", but rather that they evoke a "not yet" fully elaborated and even less realized alternative system. They are nevertheless "concrete" because they are part of a reality based on existing collective struggles and experiences, coming into being on the horizon of an egalitarian future while "no longer" respecting the dominant norms of oppressive systems.

This has been in particular the cases of the Yugoslav and other revolutions in the 20th century. They have opened the fields of *Splendour, Misery and Possibilities*, as Darko Suvin analyses them in his X-Ray of Socialist Yugoslavia (Suvin, 2018).[2] Their failure can be analysed, examining objective and/or subjective conditions and weaknesses not overcome in a given context (including lack of experience and the use of means which, retrospectively, happened to be in contradiction with the hoped ends). But they could also have failed because of repressive (economic, military, corruptive) measures taken against them by dominant classes and forces, at the national and international levels. The aspect of "concrete utopia", hopes and struggles for "another possible world" that they contained has an uncertain but open future – not to be evaluated only in the short term of *faits accomplis* in a specific historical context: as Walter Benjamin[3] wrote, "*no state of affairs is, as a cause, already a historical one. It becomes this, posthumously, through eventualities which may be separated from it by millennia*" (Benjamin, 1940).

1 Ernst Bloch (1885–1977) was born in Germany to a Jewish family and emigrated to the United States in 1938, where he began writing The Principle of Hope – a three-volume compendium originally to be called *Dreams of a Better Life*. In 1949 he became a Professor of Philosophy in East Germany. He was close to György Lukács, Bertolt Brecht, Kurt Weill, Walter Benjamin, and interested in religious and utopian thinkers such as Thomas Müntzer. Under attack because of his defence of freedoms while keeping his Marxian convictions, he went to West Germany when the Berlin Wall was built in 1961, and received an honorary chair in Philosophy at Tübingen. His work became very influential among non-orthodox Marxists, in the student movement in 1968 and in liberation theology.

2 See my review of this impressive book (Samary, 2018).

3 Walter Benjamin (1892–1940) was a German Marxist philosopher who, being Jewish, fled Vichy France for Spain in 1940. It is not clear whether he committed suicide or was assassinated by Stalinist agents. His last writings were his *Thesis on the Philosophy of History* often known as *The Concept of History*. Written in the context of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, they express a radical criticism of "historicism" and its dogmatic Marxist variant of "historical materialism". I share Michael Lowy's (2005) interpretation that this represents a critical approach to the "orthodox" Marxists of the Second and Third International and of their linear concept of progress towards a revolutionary future.

Nevertheless, there are many ways to revisit and render interpretations of the past. The issue is not, he says, to recognize how the past "*really was*", but rather "*to take control of a memory, as it flashes in a moment of danger*" – often leading to catastrophic events. How to evaluate them in historical perspective? As Benjamin stresses, feeling empathy for the losers more than for the winners means to be confronted with "*the task to brush history against the grain.*" (Benjamin, 1940). It means shedding light on historical bifurcations where alternative choices existed and on historical "holes" in dominant historiography where the point of view of losers and subaltern classes are omitted. But that does not mean wishful thinking and an optimistic view. As the French Marxist philosopher Daniel Bensaïd (1990) wrote:

> *The secular messianism of Benjamin is not the passive certainty of the next day, but the watchful concern about the possible.* […] *This permanent availability to the irruption of the possible opposes the positivist tradition which, in France in particular, has contaminated and dominated Marxism since the Second International. It resists the stupid dictatorship of the faits accomplis by giving equal weight and value to the unfulfilled facts. It does not give less importance to the meaning of the virtual than to the sense of the real.*

This is the dual concern of my research and my specific focus on the 1960s in Yugoslavia within the international context. In so doing, I was impressed and moved to discover a deep proximity of concerns and of conceptual approach with Darko Suvin's X-Ray of Socialist Yugoslavia: he is resisting dominant approaches to the Yugoslav Socialist self-management system which, he writes, are "*not only extrapolating backward from its end*", but writing it off as "*a misconceived or indeed pernicious enterprise*" from the very start (Suvin, 2018, 9). Therefore, like Benjamin, Suvin's reflections re-open history against fatalistic determinism, while expressing explicit empathy for the lived possibilities of workers' self-management and the horizon – in Ernst Bloch's sense of the willed and worked-for future – of democratic communism. Even if I will comment later some points of debates with him, I fully share the main features of his methodology including an important epistemological issue: the use of the term "socialism" on which there is no consensus among different Marxist currents. Suvin (2018, 16) explains:

> *I have strong reservations about the term as used as a historical epoch, both because of the confusion with the ideal and practice of socialism* […] *and – more neuralgically – when the epoch is thought of as a rounded-off, monadic social formation, on a par with feudalism and capitalism.*

Finally, "*renouncing to put everywhere quotation marks for 'socialism' dealing with the Yugoslav experience*", he specifies his global view and use of the notion of "socialism":

> *It is a transitional period (which may last for generations) between exploitative capitalism and communism – with communism defined as a society putting into effect both*

a full feedback democracy and Marx's full slogan. 'From each according to his ability', but then emphatically including to 'each according to her needs'.

Thus, the term "socialism", he concludes,

is useful only if understood as a field of forces polarized between a congeries of class society alienations and communist disalienation, connoting dynamic and fierce contradictions on all levels (Suvin, 2018, 17).

I have used a similar notion of "transitional" society with socialist explicit goals but conflictive trends and no secure future, since my first research on the Yugoslav self-management system and reforms[4] and up to my recent updates on events and debates associated with the revolutions of the 20th century, with perspectives enriched by new emancipatory movements and experiences (Samary & Leplat, 2019). Such a concept of a "socialist transitional society" was first introduced by the Bolshevik Marxists in the 1920s in relation to the social base (subaltern classes) and anti-capitalist dynamic of the Russian revolution and new system. The whole process was rapidly confronted with the bureaucratisation of the single party/state but also with key choices and debates among Marxists about market *versus* planning in such a socialist transitional society. But at the end of the 1930s, Stalin claimed that socialism had been achieved in "one country" on the basis of forced collectivisation and administrative centralised planning associated with party/state repression, censorship and monopoly of power. Nevertheless, against and after Stalin, a broad number of non "orthodox" Marxists like Ernest Mandel (1968), including the Yugoslav ones, used similar interpretations of "socialism" or a notion of "Socialist transition".

Such a concept covering a society opened both to processes of bureaucratisation, socialist democratic advances or capitalist restoration helps break, as Benjamin would wish, with linear concepts of "laws of progress" and a predetermined future. A variant of such determinist approach has produced an opposite Marxist (anti-Stalinist) interpretation of the Soviet Union (USSR) (or any other country of the "communist bloc") as "state capitalism" (Cliff, 1974) whose structure are supposed to be determined by external world market forces. Unkovski-Korica's (2016) main thesis expresses a similar approach:

This book has shown, then, that the external market was definitive of the development strategy the 'Yugoslav Road to Socialism' pursued from its inception. The world market shaped decisively the re-ordering of economic, social and political life after 1948 (Unkovski-Korica, 2016, 230).

4 The title of my doctoral dissertation in Economics was *The Contradictory Logics of the Yugoslav Regime of Accumulation* published in French (Samary, 1988a) as *Le Marché contre l'autogestion, l'expérience yougoslave* (*The Market Against Self-Management, the Yugoslav Experience*) which shed the light on the dynamics of the last phase.

Nevertheless, my disagreement with such analysis and my criticisms of superficial use of the notion of "market" do not prevent me to analyze external and internal capitalist pressures on the Yugoslav society in different phases, in particular the concrete causes of the final debt crisis in the 1980s. Moreover, Unkovski-Korica's extremely rich research on archives often contradicts his own determinist and somewhat dogmatic thesis – as I will show it later: it "tells" us much on real communist internal questioning about the role of market within the Tito-led leadership, not only similar to the first debates among Marxists in SU in the 1920s but deeply enriched by self-management rights and new status of workers changing the socio-political content of economic debates and conflicts, in particular among trade unions.

Finally, my conviction is that "impure concepts" of "no more" and "not yet" kind of society, also help overcome several reductionist (and binary) approaches: either apologetic presentation by the dominant party/state or their supporters, of a "socialism" avoiding, even if not repressing, critical analysis of human and social relations and conflicts; or on the contrary, assimilation of those experiences to the repressive dimension of the single party system or to their failures. But one of the key issues to be discussed while revisiting past Socialist experiences, in particular Tito's Yugoslavia, is of course the role of conscious and organised political and social "actors". There again, I globally share Suvin's dual judgment on the Yugoslav Communist Party (YCP) (Suvin, 2018, 118; underlined in the text):

> *The Party/State government was* a two-headed Janus *(at least in 1945–72). 'It was not only a factor of alienation, but concurrently also the initiator and lever of a real liberation – up to a certain important limit (the liberation is important and the limit is important).'*

This is part of the concrete historical and political analysis of the Yugoslav revolution in its international context. It is within such a historical perspective and with the above-mentioned lens that I will now present my revisiting of the Yugoslav 1960s.

THE YUGOSLAV 1960s WITHIN THE "REVOLUTIONARY CONTRACT" – AT WHICH "CROSS-ROAD"?

My point of departure is what I call the "Yugoslav revolutionary contract" (a kind of variant of the notion of "social contract" used by Michael Lebowitz, 2012).[5]

The Yugoslav Revolutionary Contract

It can be summarized by what Zoran Oklopcic (2017) calls the *"Triple Struggle": "National, Social and Geopolitical Emancipation"*. It takes place historically within what I studied in my most recent research on *Decolonial communism, Democracy & the Commons* (Sa-

5 Michael Lebowitz (2012) analyses the way the "Vanguard Party" as "conductor" of the Socialist system needs to legitimize and stabilize its rule on behalf of the "conducted" workers, through de facto "contracts" assimilated to Socialist gains.

mary & Leplat, 2019). Tito's growing conviction in 1941 that a Socialist revolutionary break was possible out of World War II was, as confirmed by Jože Pirjevec (2017, 90), directly inspired by similar convictions expressed in Lenin's April Theses during World War I. Lenin's support for the right of self-determination of nations, but also (against Stalin's forced collectivisation) for the slogan "*land to those who work on it*" were concretely implemented in the Yugoslav context. The partisans "great slogans" – "*death to fascism, liberty to the people*" and "*brotherhood and unity*" (fundamental for the national question) –" *were destroying the old class system, materially and morally*" on a concrete basis (Suvin, 2018, 26): on the liberated territories, a new self-managed power (inspired by the "dual power" during the October revolution) consolidated mass popular armed mobilisations distributing land and organising new relations. That was the strength of the Partisans-led resistance, not recognised by the Allies who supported the King in London and the Chetnik resistance up to 1943. And this directly conflicted with Stalin's Great Power Diplomacy, sharing "spheres of influence", like the Yalta Agreement according to which Yugoslavia was to be "shared 50/50".

The founding moment of the Tito's regime's legitimacy occurred in two phases: first during the war at the second session of the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ)[6] in Jajce in 1943 which was an act of public refusal of any subordination to the Great Power's Agreements on the back of the peoples. As Suvin stresses, the Yugoslav CP-led autonomous revolution was fought as an anti-imperialist war for national liberation and social justice, rather than being restricted to an anti-fascist front – and thereby broke with the Allies' line and Stalin's orders. But such conflicting logics went further: the Yugoslav Communists developed extensive links with the Greek resistance and Tito discussed directly a project of Balkan federation with the Communist Parties of Greece, Bulgaria and Albania – without much care to Stalin's diplomatic choices.

This was the real cause of 1948, more profound than immediate disputes and conflicts (Dedijer, 1971; Perović, 2007). And that was the second founding moment of the Tito-led regime, organically linked to the first one: it was a consequence of the unavoidable conflict between new autonomous revolutions (like the Chinese one also) and Stalin's hegemonistic behavior and strategy of "building socialism in one country". As Vladimir Unkovski-Korica (2016, 67) rightly writes:

> *Even before the Tito-Stalin split, it was clear that the Yugoslav Communist leadership believed it was building a "Yugoslav road to Socialism". Rather than being an isolated project, the development of an efficient competition-state that emerged from the liberation struggle was only a part, but an important part, of the revolutionary struggle being waged by the Yugoslav Communists. By their example and in their foreign policy they would play a vanguard role in a new wave of change that would tip the balance of forces internationally against imperialism; headed by the United States and Britain. Tito's own sense of mission and of independence were clearly in friction with the USSR before 1948. The KPJ's domestic moves and economic plans were never dictated from Moscow. The KPJ leadership sought both to borrow and to adapt Soviet methods to Yugoslav conditions.*

6 Antifašističko vijeće narodnog oslobođenja Jugoslavije.

Nevertheless, the split with Stalin was unforeseen and certainly not wished by the Yugoslav communists. Moreover, up to 1948 any public criticism of the USSR was repressed as "Trotskyite" while Tito claimed to be "the first Stalinist". Whatever the conflicts and disagreements with the Kremlin, the USSR was still for them "the Socialist Homeland" and a key element of world relationships of forces against imperialist policies. They always kept such a view – and fear of dependency on Western loans – which explains their hopes of new relations after Stalin's death and final involvement in the building of the Non-Aligned movement after the Hungarian crisis in 1956 and disillusion: beyond short term "tilts" or pragmatic "zig-zags", my interpretation of "the driving force" (like Suvin's) is not external but internal: the "revolutionary contract" and its communist commitment needed a deepening and extension of the socialist revolution and emancipation from external dependency: the "Triple Struggle" was the "contract" but the difficulties were immense.

If the driving forces of change were internal, this never meant autarky nor nationalism or suppression of external pressures. On the contrary, the Yugoslav Communist leaders were deeply committed to an internationalist concept of their revolution as stressed above. Nevertheless, they understood it on the basis of egalitarian relations which the Stalinist USSR would not accept. The Yugoslav Communists had to find on the "domestic field" the (internal) conditions to resist Yalta's kind of agreements, including Stalin's choice to "build socialism in one country" and hegemonist behaviour: it was only through a real (multi) national revolutionary process in Yugoslavia that they could build a popular-based relationship of forces leading to victory and legitimacy at the national and international levels.

In 1948, they needed to explain a split they did not desire, to find the means to resist its disastrous effects and to build on their own Socialist project. This produced two major changes in the "revolutionary contract". The first one is the most identified with the specific Tito-led system – the introduction of self-management. But before commenting on it, we must stress another consequence of the split, less underlined: the "revolutionary contract" had to become "Yugoslav" only, with the abandonment of the Balkan project. From Tito's point of view, aware and afraid of nationalist conflicts, stabilizing relations with Bulgaria was important for Macedonia; similarly, a confederation with Albania would have permitted Kosovo to be at the same time linked to Albania and to Serbia. The retreat into a "Yugoslav" project was a disaster for the Kosovo Albanians who revolted and were repressed. The creation of the new Yugoslavia would imply granting a status of constituent peoples endowed with the right of self-determination to Slavic peoples only.

I would consider this issue as the first Achilles' heel of the new project. A possible "turning point" occurred in 1968 when Albania, like Yugoslavia, condemned the Soviet intervention against the Prague Spring – which opened a phase of increased rights for Kosovo Albanians and cultural collaboration between the two countries for the establishment of Pristina University in Albanian language. The freedoms and improvements in the standard of living within Tito's Yugoslavia could consolidate a real "belonging", with equal status between Slavic and non-Slav peoples – which a socialist Balkan or European frame-work could facilitate.

The internal dimension of "national emancipation" within the federation was complex and intertwined with other socio-economic and political issues which, together, could

open alternative roads. The first Yugoslavia had been rejected as a "prison of Peoples" with a Leninist conviction that no attractive and stable new union was possible if not based on free and egalitarian relations. "Yugoslavianism" had been hiding a Serb-dominated federation. That is why it was rejected (Jović, 2006). But during the 1950s, it seems that the Yugoslav leaders hoped for the emergence of a workers and socialist "Yugoslav identity" consolidated through self-management rights. In 1953, the Chamber of Nationalities was merged with the Federal Chamber while a Chamber of Producers was introduced up to 1963. Between 1958 (after the first Congress of Workers' Councils) and 1963, the role of communes was enhanced as a basic socio-political structure, while different councils were introduced besides the Federal one, expressing the will to stimulate the emergence of socialist transnational socio-economic and cultural projects and consciousness – which seemed to have been Tito's specific concern, associated, with concerns about market reform (Unkovski-Korica, 2016, 223)[7]:

Tito's own belief was that the market was corrosive of domestic affairs. He hoped for slower adoption of market reform and greater international competitiveness through more planned and state-led integration of enterprises across republic borders. Tito's desire was to appeal to worker patriotism and participation to make this breakthrough towards export-orientation. But he quickly realised centralisation in Yugoslavia came with Serbian hegemony. Since he had fought against this in the pre-war period, he gave up on this course, and accepted decentralised, regional specialisation.

This is a second internal Achilles' heel: the identification of "Yugoslavianism" and federalism with Serb domination, while a new socialist content was concretely emerging, from the commune to the whole federation. But to consolidate such a trend a real democratic political system was needed.

The "economic debate" – and its supposed "objective law", was the third Achilles' Heel, in spite of an immense asset: the unique introduction in the Constitution of self-management rights in relation with social ownership. Both contents would be conflictive and evolutive in all Constitutions, from 1953 up to the final *Law on Associated Labor* added in 1976 to the 1974 constitution, responding to the multifold tensions expressed in the second half of the 1960s. Whatever be its internal weaknesses and contradictions – leading to what I called a real "stalemate" and "neither plan nor market" regulation (Samary, 1988a, 235–273), this Constitutional Law was the last to increase workers' self-management rights and protect the alienation of "social ownership" by state ownership or by group ownership" as a form of privatization: this means that the "market reform" introduced in 1965 was stopped (international market forces were not dominant). But there was the need for "collective" democratically centralized forms of decision-making on the main choices of management of "social ownership" as "commons".[8] That is the interpretation I will now specify.

7 Which contradicts hopefully his thesis of a "western-led" kind of orientation since 1948.

8 Specifying my approach of that important but ambivalent notion would go beyond the scope of that contribution (Samary, 2017; Samary & Leplat, 2019) but I fully share the approach presented in the collective

A Yugoslav Self-management system with what "market" – that is, what social rights?

The progressive political effect of the 1948 split hopefully limited the Stalinist repressive "culture" against "Cominformists" (Banac, 1988). The introduction of self-management opened a deep transformation in the concept of the Party's role as Communist League associated with the abandonment of a hypercentralized and administrative planning system. On the political and ideological point of view Djilas produced an interpretation of Stalin's hegemonistic policy convincingly putting the emphasis on concrete factors: the defense of a "besieged fortress" against a world coalition, isolation, destruction of the country and the urgent task of rebuilding an exhausted, destroyed and largely backward country: all these factors pushed toward a strong state which would also fit in with "Great Russian" behavior, both internal and external. Against Stalin and statism they mobilized Marx and his support for the Paris Commune, the communist project of the "direct association of producers" and of "withering away of the state" was compatible with the deep communist and Marxist commitment of these leaders, rooted in a long Balkan socialist tradition. This was also a concrete and effective ideological way to fight against isolation within the workers movement. But for what kind of self-management system?

For Suvin (and I support this approach) this was a step forward towards social emancipation, prolonging the revolutionary role of the Communist party in the liberation struggle. Even if it was introduced "from the top" (as opposed to a spontaneous invention, like the Soviets were in Russia) and after the immediate years of centralized control as a way to impel economic reconstruction and consolidate the new power, they were not conceivable and understandable without a revolutionary context, the deep communist commitments of that "top" and emancipatory traditions in the organization of revolutionary struggles.

The impressive patriotic and popular mobilization to reconstruct the country after the experience of the partisan-led "do-it-your-self" on the ground could not but be inspiring for the research of a concrete socialist answer. But according to Unkovski-Korica the introduction of self-management was aimed at channelling the workers under market pressure more than at mobilising them: his Chapter 2 on that issue presents "*self-management at the service of the market*" and he concludes (Unkovski-Korica, 2016, 222) that self-management was "the ideological center-piece of the tilt to the West".[9] This divergence with Suvin is even clearer when Unkovski-Korica considers that globally the driving force was "external dependence" on foreign capital, while Suvin argues that the driving force through which to interpret the main transformations of the system, at least in its first decades, was internal. As already mentioned, I would agree with this second formulation which can be concretized here: self-management was a social relation aiming at consolidating autonomous decisions both against capitalist and Stalinist external pressures. Besides complex theoretical debates, the question of what was the real "driving

paper prepared for the 2nd Balkan Forum that took place on May 12–14, 2013 at the Subversive Forum in Zagreb (The Struggle for the Commons in the Balkans, 2015).

9 Stalin would not have disagreed with such presentation!

force" can be checked on the basis of concrete results: the social structure of the country (in the period covered by Unkovski-Korica, including the choice of "Non-Alignment") were in open contrast with what the first capitalist Yugoslavia was before (and what it would become after) the global phase of the Tito's regime.

The well-known Croatian economist Branko Horvat began his *Requiem for the Yugoslav Economy* as follows (Horvat, 1993, 1):

> *It is sometimes said that Yugoslavia disintegrated because of its economic failures. Those who know a bit more talk about the failure of self-management. Still others say that social property was responsible for the failures. Some economists admit that economic development occurred but maintain that this was because of foreign aid. None of these explanations is correct.*

He stressed that while the pre-war Yugoslavia was "underdeveloped",

> *by 1968, Yugoslavia had surpassed the prewar level of production and consumption of the most advanced European countries. From 1953 to 1965, the annual rate of productivity growth was 4.7%, as compared with that of European capitalist economies (3.3 percent) and statist economies (3%). Productivity growth was probably the highest in the world during that period. At the same time the relative indices of the basic welfare of the population (life expectancy at birth, education, and health services) were much higher than those of capitalist countries, but also substantially higher than those of welfare states. In fact, around 1971 they were the highest in the world.*

For all these reasons, he disagreed with all the quoted interpretations of the final failure and added: "*The causes are political*".

Darko Suvin shares such views, considering the economic and political gains of the first two decades: victory against fascism and national independence, mass upward social mobility for the plebeian classes, "*which changed the life of millions for the better*", with full employment, free social services, and a huge growth of schooling (Suvin, 2018, 37–39 and Part 3). He recalls that training workers was especially acute in a country where before 1945 there were few industrial, managerial or scientific skills available and two thirds of youngsters still had 4 years' schooling or less. A large programme of adult education during the first 15 years received generous financing. In its culmination of 1967/68, there were 236 "Workers" Universities which held almost 10,000 courses with 311,000 participants and over 20,000 lectures with 2 million listeners.

Nevertheless, all this leaves open and complex the debate on the market (even with Branko Horvat) within a socialist project. And Unkovski-Korica does not clarify it at all in his global statement – while he offers rich evidence of the socialist dimension of concrete debates on economic categories, permitted as nowhere else in the world, by the introduction of self-management rights: he even gives evidence of the fact that "market reform" could be defended from the point of view of workers' emancipation and within the trade unions.

As Suvin reminds us in his X-Ray of Socialist Yugoslavia, Boris Kidrič, a leading revolutionary figure, Marxist economist and member of the new government, was in favour of autonomous socially owned enterprises, seen as the subject, creating income, rather than the object of state administration. Far from having a clear concept, he was hesitant, as Unkovski-Korica quotes him in his debate with another top Communist leader Svetozar Vukmanović-Tempo.[10] Therefore, comments the researcher (Unkovski-Korica, 2016, 100): "*The period following the turn towards the market in mid-1950 remained one of uncertainty and ideological experimentation.*"

In fact, hesitations were visible up to the 1970s, each reform increasing self-management rights and transforming the concrete concept of "social-ownership" – therefore changing the role of the "market" (without clarifying it, in my point of view). But increasing contradictions and inconsistencies in the 1970s (therefore before the debt crisis in the 1980s), were not primarily the result of external International Monetary Fund pressures: even more, at the end of the 1960s and up to the end of the 1970s it was the capitalist world order itself which was under internal and external Communist pressures and confronted with its own crisis of profitability and imperialist domination – as much as the single party regimes of the "Communist Bloc" were confronted with specific popular unrest against their own forms of domination and non-satisfaction of increasing needs. 1968 is a "symbolic" year of radicalisation (especially of the young generations) against all relations of domination, in all regions of the world, with a dominant anti-capitalist dynamic.

What were Yugoslav specificities in the 1960s?

As stressed by Sharon Zukin (1975, 4),

the discrepancy between theory and practice is common to all political systems. It would be foolish to lash at the Yugoslavs – no matter how grand the claims of their official ideology – on this score.

Therefore, she adds, it is more interesting to stress "*how*" a "*particular form*" of such discrepancy developed in Socialist Yugoslavia (Zukin, 1975, 4):

we may regard socialist self-management in Yugoslavia less as a full-blown ideological or institutional system than as an ever-emerging chain of choice and response under certain conditions. In their choices within and responses to recent historical situations, both Yugoslav leaders and masses have shown a great deal of independence and initiative. […] *But if we look at the goals and policies associated with Yugoslav socialism over the past twenty-five years, then we find that the choice has remained overwhelmingly the leaders' and the response the masses.*

10 On Kidrič, who died in 1953, see Darko Suvin (2018) and my review (2018); "Tempo" – after governmental responsibilities, was appointed and played a major role at the head of the Yugoslav (Party-controlled) Trade-Unions after 1958 for about ten years.

I have implemented a similar approach in my analysis of the different Yugoslav reforms while stressing a more interactive dialectical (even if hierarchical and non-linear) process. Such analysis is indeed open to different focus and interpretation. Concrete historical research and interpretation are still to be developed about the very "essence" and transformation of such an evolutive "chain" in the different periods of Yugoslav history and the moment and conditions of "the break" of the "chain".

In what happened (retrospectively) to be the middle of the life of Tito's Yugoslavia, in 1968, impressive gains since 1948, already mentioned, were still associated with other strong external and internal sources of popular legitimation of the regime with paradoxical effects: an increased expression of new conflicting expectations and causes of polarisation and dissatisfaction.

Khrushchev's trip in Belgrade in 1955 to apologise for Stalin's slanders and actions had been an historical event: it surprised the whole world and destabilised the pro-Soviet Communist parties. But it also would rapidly open a new phase of conflicts with the Maoist currents which glorified Stalin against Khrushchev's line of "peaceful coexistence". And after Tito's disillusion about his hope for more egalitarian relations with Moscow, in 1956–1958, the "Yugoslav Road to Socialism" would find its external support in the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement, with Third-World and anti-colonial leaders in Belgrade in 1961. This was a source of international prestige but with ambivalent contents between state and party politics, and therefore ambiguous impact: "peaceful coexistence" in state politics could be in conflict with anti-colonial and anti-imperialist radicalisation within the Non-aligned Movement itself (from Bandung in 1955 to the Tricontinental meeting in Cuba in 1966) impacting the world-wide (and Yugoslav) youth radicalisation.

In turn, Tito's international successes combined with the internal logic of constitutional rights associated to self-management in the phase 1958–1963, had opened room for freedoms of criticism: this allowed an increasing expression of conflicts and debates predominantly on the point of view of discrepancies between self-management rights, socialist aims and practice which never existed in the other "brother countries". This was combined with freedom in international cultural and material exchanges, visas for traveling abroad (be it for a negative reason, in order to export unemployment (Woodward, 1995).[11] Altogether, "*From the mid-1960s, reforms fostered market socialism and heralded a new wave of consumer culture (along with increasingly open borders and international cooperation in decolonisation and non-alignment)*" (Archer, Duda & Stubbs, 2016, 8).

I would highlight two unique features of the Yugoslav regime in this phase.

On the intellectual side of the society, polarisations were normal and inevitable. But the very existence of *Praxis*[12] as "loyal opposition" (as Suvin calls it) with its own autonomous initiatives had an important internal influence (among the students) and in-

11 Susan L. Woodward stressed all the mechanisms which permitted a *de facto* increasing hidden unemployment to develop when "alternative" occupations to existing jobs were possible (through emigration, the domestic role of women and private peasants' activities): this was another, non-visible, Achilles Heel of the system.

12 See archives of the international edition of *Praxis* (1965–1973).

ternational impact as highlighted in a recent article (Secor, 2018).[13] It expressed both a radical commitment of well-known intellectuals to self-management rights and sharp criticisms of the concrete experience (from within the system) against all sources of alienation of such rights: from a statist form of socialism to "market socialism", and from open repressive trends to any cult of personality. This would culminate in open support for the June 1968 independent socialist student movement (see in particular on these issues, Stojanović, 1970; 1973).

On the workers' side, the very fact that strikes could be "officially" and seriously analysed by Neca Jovanov (1979)[14] between 1958 and 1969, would illustrate two apparent contradictory truths: on the one hand an obvious discrepancy between self-management rights and the practical power of decision-making, often stressed; but on the other hand, a de facto "right of veto" and extremely rapid success of strikes at least up to the end of the 1970s, reflecting the status of the workers within the system and the support they generally received from leading figures of the regime – a feature lasting enough to influence the logic of strikes even in the 1980s (Musić, 2016). Such ambivalence could not appear in empirical data about stratification or conflicts. They could better be expressed through answers given in enquiries (as Neca Jovanov stressed) according to the way the question was raised: if the issue was how workers could participate in concrete decision-making and control on financial and investment choices, they would say clearly that they had no real power on such issues – and in the late 1960s they could even add they had no competence, therefore accepting the "normality" of the increasing stratification within self-management organs and factories. Nevertheless, if the next question was more general about the self-management "status", they would express a clear support to such status by emphasising the "dignity" it brought them (Musić, 2016).

The recognition of the workers' central role and dignity in the productive process changed the nature of the economic and social procedures in an evolutive and unclear manner. In the phase 1953–1964 the global economic logic was still not *dominated* by market relations and certainly not by capitalist market criteria, as already mentioned and illustrated by the socio-economical structural changes of the society. But the form of planning had to change to be compatible with self-management. I analysed it in my research under the title: "self-management stifled by the plan" (Samary, 1988a, 115–157): my aim was to express the dominant conflicts behind different sub-phases and hesitations. Up to the mid-1950s "*the state could still allot profits and decide on almost all investments in the enterprise*" (Zukin, 1975, 60). Therefore, "*it is not surprising that the First Congress of Self-Managers in June 1957 demanded greater autonomy for enterprises in production planning, spending, and development*" (Zukin, 1975, 60). The introduction of Central Funds channelling two-thirds of the surplus permitted to implement strategical planned aims of industrialisation and reduction of inequalities, compatible with decen-

13 In this article, Laura Secor also analyses the way increasing nationalist views later penetrated and destroyed the Serbian part of *Praxis* and the group as a whole.

14 I am referring to direct discussions I had with him in March 1983 both on this fact and on workers' feelings on self-management.

tralised self-managing of short term and local choices. Instead of administrative planning, "economic" instruments (or "market categories", to be distinguished from a "market regulation") were used: different kinds of "administrative prices", differentiated taxes were compatible with decentralised management of factories. But that did not give any democratic means of decision-making about strategic priorities and criteria; neither did that permit control of the use of redistributive funds, both on social and national points of views. Nor did that give any answer on how to improve "growth" and "productivity"[15]: this was a turning point, a "cross roads" before the choice of "market reform" and confederalisation of the system. Socialist aims and relations could have led to finding an ad hoc stimulant to improve the quality and the result of the "social product" through a better "association of labour" based on self-managed "communities of interest" at all territorial levels and branches. In addition, the investment funds could have been democratized and "socialized" ("communizing" the resources and the criteria for using them efficiently).

Instead, market competition was to become the stimulant, and the funds were suppressed. Their resources were distributed to the self-managed factories (increasing their rights and the amount of net income under their control). A new banking system supposed to implement "objective economic laws" from market criteria instead of "political" ones. This was a real radical "market reform" (1965–1971) which I characterized as "self-management stifled by the market" (Samary, 1988a, 163–165): the decentralised banking system rapidly concentrated more and more resources and its allocation of credits could only increase inequalities instead of efficient and "neutral" logics.

Indeed, as both Suvin and Unkovski-Korica did, I made a radical criticism of the disastrous effects of such "socialist market" competition: increasing horizontal inequalities between regions and between factories and therefore between workers' incomes according to the market and not according to labour; vertical loss of real power for self-management where workers in factories were confronted with "anonymous" market rules and coalitions between managers and the banking system, leading to increasing strikes.

The way such reforms were interrupted, at the beginning of the 1970s, is generally not analyzed whereas this is a key element of judgement about "what were the driving forces"? My point of view is that both the 1965 market reform and its interruption stemmed from a political rationale, which I associate with the Yugoslav socialist "revolutionary contract" between the Communist leaders and the "constituent" actors of Tito's Yugoslavia. Its concrete institutional expression changed from one reform to another; according to the pragmatic evolution of "legitimate" conflicts (according to the leaders' interpretation), the latter reflected the "contradiction of social ownership" and of "pluralist communities of interest" as Kardelj would call them.

The first dimension of such a contract was the increasing of workers' (and working people's) rights – the social basis of the regime. Since Kidrič's initial reflections expressing a communist point of view, the goal of increasing workers' control over the Social Product through self-management procedures was "playing" behind all socio-economic

15 Introducing market material stimulants was the general concern of the debate within all socialist countries in the 1960s, in particular in Cuba, that I present in Samary, 2019, 37–45.

conflicts and debates. It encompassed a new content in the 1960s (with unclear Marxist approach) linked to the extension of "social self-management" to services. But the first practical way to increase workers' control appeared in 1965 to be (or was presented as) the suppression of planning, even under its new form of investment funds.

The second feature of the contract was the other source of political legitimacy of the regime: the recognition of national diversity and rights sensitive to a free multi-national federation. However, it was increasingly expressed in that phase by representatives of the richest republics opposing the redistributionist logic of the plan which, in their view, reduced their efficacy and contribution to the whole system (the Slovenian leader Edvard Kardelj was notably attentive to these questions while nonetheless opposing nationalism).

Finally, a third "internal" component of the contract linking the other within a socialist political rationale was what I would call the uncertain "political economy" of socialism: in other words, the place and concept of the market.

In the 1960s, against the experience of arbitrariness of bureaucratic planning and political choices, the market could appear both as an instrument of "free choices" and secondly of "objective" laws to be "respected" and which were socially neutral. The economists would make theories about this but the workers would (rightly) react pragmatically to the unjust and inefficient effect of such "laws": the rapid increase of inequalities and the implementation of the slogan "to each according to market results" instead of socialist and communist criteria to be updated democratically.

From increasing strikes to the Yugoslav June 1968

In June 1968 students occupied different faculties in Belgrade, demanding "another kind of socialism" as Dragomir Olujić, one of the participants in that movement, recalled in a recent interview (Olujić, 2018). Questioned about who influenced them, he commented:

> *The main intellectual influences came from the group of professors of philosophy and sociology gathered around the Korčula Summer School and the journal Praxis (and Filozofija).* […] *In them we found inspiration, from them we learned how to think, from them we got enormous knowledge, through them we got a window onto the world, our first contacts with the world.*

The *Praxis* current combined radical support for self-management rights against statist alienation and against market alienation. Therefore, the main student demands were denouncing corruption and privileges,

> *but also 'the red bourgeoisie' and 'the transformation of social property into shareholding'. They were 'For integral self-management', and for the 'Student-Worker' alliance. They also demanded better conditions for universities and student life, and especially 'better access to higher education for workers' children. They received*

popular support with money, including from workers. But they were also, significantly, supported by 'political institutions' and top figures of the state apparatus like Svetozar Vukmanović Tempo and General Gojko Nikoliš (we used his car to distribute the newspaper Student in Zagreb and Ljubljana).

Significantly in relation to the regime, on the seventh day, Tito gave a speech which, to the surprise of his collaborators and party nomenklatura, supported the student protests and student demands, reminded Olujić, stressing with humor:

with the 'well known' principle of 90 + 10 percent – namely 90% of students are alright and 10% are not ... We knew immediately which 10% were not 'acceptable' (Olujić, 2018).

Contrary both to Suvin and to Unkovski-Korica, I think important to analyse the concrete measures taken by the still dominant Tito's leadership. It combined selective repression (against the "10%" of all independent movement) and concessions along contradictory lines without finding the means of any political and socio-economic stabilisation. Nevertheless, new rights were introduced. They can be analysed with their internal contradictions, but they were still linked to the two internal dimensions of the "contract" (social and national rights) as expressed in the new constitutional reforms of the 1970s (Samary, 1988a, 235–274). Tito's and Kardelj's hope was that the increase of republican and provincial rights (collective presidency, specific Chambers replacing "people Councils") would decrease national tensions. But, besides political dimensions (new official "leading role" of the party and integration of the army within the institution), economic and social dimensions opened new conflicting trends.

The confederalization of the system included the decentralized control on foreign exchange, one of the central demands expressed during the "Croatian Spring" in 1971. That would increase radically the pressures of world market on nationalist basis within the whole economic and political system in the next phase. On the other hand, in the beginning of the 1970s, the autonomous banking system was dismantled and a "cultural revolution" was launched against technocratic powers: the big factories were divided into "Basic Organizations of Associated Labour" which could establish contractual links and forms of planning. Self-management was enlarged to all public services through the form of "SIZ"[16] – "Self-managing Communities of Interest" permitting direct association of users and workers of a given service (in culture, education, health and other spheres).

Globally, "social ownership" was now to belong "to everyone and no-one" as it was said: it was defined in the constitution both against statism and against "group property" that the June 1968 student movement had denounced. Therefore, in order to be allowed to privatise such property in the 1990s, new republican laws would have to be introduced, against that constitution, allowing the dismantlement of social ownership either by the

16 Samoupravna interesna zajednica. Researches are needed on the concrete experiences of such SIZ in the 1970s and 1980s.

new states or through shareholding and the market. A new system of delegation was introduced with new Chambers of "Associated Labour" – but not at the federal level as a major concession to Republican increasing power within the system.

At the Second Congress of Self-Managers organised in Sarajevo in 1971, the future changes were presented by Kardelj and Tito, who explicitly expressed his fears that the new powers given to the Republics could destroy the system: he called on the workers to take care and eventually mobilise against such danger. But the independent youth movement of 1968 as much as the trade union's socio-political strength had been dismantled. The League of Communists had lost its revolutionary dynamism and unity which could not be kept without radical democratisation and transparent pluralist debates. At the Sarajevo Congress, Tito's fear for destructive trends was a call for "discipline" and accepting decisions which were already taken: while a new "constituent" process was needed "*the historical leadership had failed to transform its historical legitimacy into a democratic one*."

The selective repression of intellectual current (be they Marxists or liberals), the real "pro-workers" turn of the new Law on "Associated Labour" and the patriotic use of the intervention of Moscow-led tanks in Prague during the summer of 1968[17] produced dramatic changes in the relations of critical intellectuals and the workers. Therefore, the perception (and reality) of the 1970s was certainly extremely diverse in the context of very differentiated cultural and political contexts within the federation. Olujić's interview expresses the feeling of "victory" among students at least in Serbia – on "short term" (Olujić, 2018) – with cultural freedoms among the youth after 1968 (in particular, like elsewhere, the raise of feminism). A more complex picture if offered by Jure Ramšak (2019) shedding lights on the influence of the Western New Left's ideas among Slovenian students radicalised through *Praxis* Summer Schools international openings. As he stresses, the anti-imperialist commitment of radical students from Belgrade to Ljubljana, triggered by the image of the US war in Vietnam, grew into conflict with the official Tito's foreign policy of "Non-Alignment". Similar than their peers in France and elsewhere, Yugoslav students wondered about the real "subject" of history. Opposing reformist illusions, they found "revolutionary-democratic vision" in Rosa Luxemburg's writings, which were seen as an alternative to both the "established social democracy as well as state-socialism", and therefore "*an ideal basis for criticizing the hated regimes on both sides of the Iron Curtain*" (Ramšak, 2019).

In such a context without credible alternatives, I would like to stress a last evidence of the increasing possible extension of a self-managed Socialist system as a "concrete utopia" to "brother countries" in 1968: what was occurring in Czechoslovakia tells a lot about that – and is generally ignored. The reformist wing of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (the leader Alexander Dubček and the economist Ota Šik) reflected an international debate within the Communist parties in power, from USSR to Cuba,[18] on

17 A new popular "defense" was organized against any potential internal or external aggressor. Tito deprived all leaders of the June 1968 movement from the right to be involved in the organized patriotic military training, meaning de facto that one could not trust them to defend the country. I was a direct witness of such climate.

18 I present the different reforms and debates in Samary, 1988b.

the need to reform administrative planning. The dominant logic was seeking to enlarge the margins of the market and material incentives for the directors. The reforms were not popular among workers (because of their inegalitarian effects, the threat to jobs they represented and lack of self-management rights). In reality, it was to respond to this defiance that the democratic opening against censorship was introduced in favor of "Socialism with human face" supported by the reformist wing seeking to consolidate its social base. The explosion of Spring 1968 did not respect the boundaries of the official reforms, however.

Dominant presentations tend to present binary opposition between market reformists versus "conservatives" – often reduced to (real) neo-Stalinist currents. But they don't say that a third current existed, represented by people like Jaroslav Šabata and Rudolf Slánský Jr. (son of the party leader executed during the "anti-Titoist" purges), much influenced by the Yugoslav experience. This expressed the potential of a concrete extension of that experience in such a phase. This current began to publicly encourage workers to elaborate new proposals of law and rights for workers' councils. The workers of the Wilhelm Pieck Factory in Prague established new statutes in June 1968 and opened their factory to the clandestine congress of the CP during the Soviet-led military intervention in August. And it was during and against such occupation that tens and soon, in 1969, hundreds of workers councils emerged. A survey of 95 councils, in manufacturing and other sectors, found that 83 percent of employees had participated in council elections and about half the council members were also Communist Party members. The trade unions and the council movement met to elaborate a new law proposed to the Parliament (while Dubcek was still in government). Rudolf Slánský Jr., commented in Prače on the council movement's proposals on enterprise ownership:

> *The only possible method of transforming the bureaucratic-administrative model of our socialist society into a democratic model is to abolish the monopoly of the state administration over the exercise of ownership functions, and to decentralize it towards those whose interest lies in the functioning of the socialist enterprise, i.e. the collectives of enterprise workers* (Dolack, 2016).

Which is similar to Kidrič's approach. About a decade later, in Poland, the most impressive democratic workers' movement in Eastern Europe, the free Polish trade union Solidarność, was fighting for a "Self-managed Republic", against the oppressive rule of the one-party state, but with the active support of thousands of its members. As the British Marxist political scientist Peter Gowan commented:

> *The fundamental feature of the Polish upheaval that has been so difficult for socialists (and anti-socialists) in the West to grasp has been the fact that the Polish workers combine a tenacious political opposition to continued monopolistic rule by the Polish Communist Party (PZPR) with a no less tenacious defence of a group of rights never guaranteed by any capitalist state* (MacDonald, 1983).

That would be the last concrete evidence of possible extension of what was not and could not be only a "Yugoslav" road to Socialism nor staying "non-aligned". Further debates (Elson, 1988; Mandel, 1988; Lebowitz, 2016) and their updating (Samary & Leplat, 2019) have stressed the combined need for "socialisation" of the market, of the state and of planning to break from the false dichotomy between bureaucratic centralisation and "market socialism" based on atomized self-management rights and one-party state.

OPEN CONCLUSION AND QUESTIONS FOR NEW RESEARCH

I would have liked to deepen and check my interpretations in at least three directions – needing further research and pluralist debates, both historical and analytical: the first concerns the "political economy" of socialism; the second the articulation of national and social democratic rights within a self-managed political system; the third is linked to the historical interpretation of the different phases of the Yugoslav system within the "chain of choices and answers" as linked to the "concrete utopia" of a socialist self-managed system.

My professional profile as an economist explains why the first issue was the specific focus of my initial research (Samary, 1988a; 1988b): I wanted to deepen and update through the Yugoslav experience the first Marxist debates occurring in USSR in the 1920s about the place of the market in "socialist transitional societies", relaunched in the 1960s in all state-socialist countries. In Yugoslavia and more generally, the rejection of statism gave an emancipatory dimension to self-management while increasing the belief in "objective market laws" to be respected. That is why I considered it as an "internal" issue not to be confused with an external/internal capitalist pressure, even if the latter also existed: I analysed it concretely within conflictive logics in the Yugoslav system, but I considered that it was not (yet) dominant in the 1960s – as illustrated by the "internal" driving forces leading to the interruption of the market reform in 1972–1976. External and internal transformations behind the debt crisis in the 1980s changed the dominant dynamics of the crisis. Therefore, my analysis disagrees with two opposing views: the first considers that the suppression of capitalist private property is sufficient to give to market relations a kind of universal efficiency (therefore socially neutral). The other tends to identify the market and even the use of money and prices with a capitalist-led orientation. I tried to contribute to the up-dating of a third approach (Samary, 2019), sharing much with Ernest Mandel (1974), Diane Elson (1988) or Michael Lebowitz (2016) – which is urgently needed.

The second set of questions is linked to my understanding of the first (political-economic) issue in a concrete manner: my thesis is that economic choices are not abstract and ahistorical questions. Each system needs to elaborate its criteria. Therefore economic categories (like prices) and rights (linked to social ownership and self-management) useful to "evaluate" needs, waste, efficiency, productivity must take into account the explicit socialist aims as decided by a complex diversity of human beings as workers and consumers (or citizens) – but also as men and women of different cultures



Fig. 1: At the gathering place of the Ljubljana hike at the wire in 1975 (Foto: MGML documentation – Muzej in galerije mesta Ljubljane / The Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana).

and nations, working in industry, services or the countryside. The invention of a "radical democracy" adequate to a self-managed system taking into account such diversity is essential for the elaboration of a "political economy" of a socialist self-managed system fighting against all relations of domination – which neither the market nor statist planning would do. The Achille's heels of the Yugoslav experience were linked to the lack of satisfactory answers to such issues. Nevertheless, the 1970s were still open to a new set of "micro-socialist" and impure but rich experiences: from contractual self-managed planning to direct exchange of labour or from "communities of interest" between producers and users of the same service to the system of delegations to different political "Chambers". I had no competence and means to study them and I hope new research (like Archer, Duda & Stubbs, 2016 or Archer & Musić, 2017) can shed precious light on archives and living witnesses of the complex reality of that period, without a consistent self-managed socialist way out of the crisis.

The third set of questions I raised integrates the former ones within the "chain of choices and answers" which structured the different phases of Yugoslav history. In that contribution, my thesis has been that the June 1968 movement influenced by the *Praxis* school was not mainly about "student" unrest but was the climax or the most radical expression of political socialist democratic demands resisting both state alienation and market competition and alienation. This was not only a Yugoslav "concrete utopia".

1968: JUGOSLOVANSKI SISTEM SAMOUPRAVLJANJA NA RAZPOTJU: REVIZIJA "KONKRETNE UTOPIJE" LETA 2018

Catherine SAMARY
Université Paris-Dauphine, Place du Maréchal de Lattre de Tassigny, 75775 Paris, Francija
International Institute of Research and Education (IIRE), Lombokstraat 40, 1094 Amsterdam, Nizozemska
e-mail: samarycatherine@yahoo.fr

POVZETEK

*Pričujoče razmišljanje o jugoslovanski izkušnji se naslanja na koncept "konkretne utopije" in socializma kot konfliktne "družbe v tranziciji", ki ga delim z Darkom Suvinom (*Splendour, Misery and Possibilities. An X-Ray of Socialist Yugoslavia*. Chicago, Haymarket Books, 2018) in ga v članku tudi uvodoma pojasnim. Skozi to optiko prikazujem svojo interpretacijo gonilnih sil ključnih notranjih sprememb Titove Jugoslavije: emancipacijskega "trojnega boja" ali "revolucionarne pogodbe", ki so bile izražene v temeljnih aktih Titove Jugoslavije in bi se lahko realizirale tudi skozi samoupravni sistem. Tovrstna "konkretna utopija" je transformirala konfliktno polemiko in izbire v zvezi s socialno-ekonomskimi in nacionalnimi pravicami. Medtem ko opozarjam na nekatere šibke točke tega sistema, postavljam tezo, da so samoupravne pravice v šestdesetih letih dobile široko javno podporo, na podlagi katere so lahko tedanja družbena gibanja izrazila težnjo, da bi zmanjšala razkorak med socialističnimi cilji, izraženimi v "revolucionarni pogodbi", in negativnimi učinki reform.*

V nadaljevanju razpravljam o gibanju iz junija 1968 in njegovih že znanih emancipacijskih zahtevah, proti katerim je bila sprožena selektivna represija. Ob tem pa opozarjam tudi na nove samoupravne pravice, z ustavnimi reformami priznane v sedemdesetih letih, a v svoji notranji protislovnosti še vedno vezane na socialno in nacionalno dinamiko jugoslovanske »družbene pogodbe«.

Kot vrhunec dinamike v zvezi s »konkretno utopijo« samoupravljanja predstavljam nepoznano epizodo delavskih svetov jeseni 1968 na Češkoslovaškem kot konkreten dokaz možnega podaljška tistega, kar ni bilo in ne more biti le "jugoslovanska" pot v socializem. Izven prevladujočih reprezentacij tega zgodovinskega procesa kot nasprotja med tržnimi reformisti in partijskimi konservativci imamo namreč opravit tudi s tretjim tokom, ki so ga predstavljali ljudje kot sta bila Jaroslav Šabata in Rudolf Slánský, ml. Ti so začeli delavce javno spodbujati, naj udejanjajo nov predlog zakona o ustanovitvi delavskih svetov po načelih, ki so odzvanjala ideje jugoslovanskih, pa tudi drugih teoretikov samoupravnega socializma, in so ovrgla navidezno dihotomijo izbire med birokratskim centralizmom in »tržnim socializmom«.

Ključne besede: konkretna utopija, Ernst Bloch, Darko Suvin, Titova Jugoslavija, samoupravljanje, tržna reforma, junij 1968, Praxis

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Darovec, D. (2011): Moderna štetja prebivalstva in slovensko-hrvaška etnična meja v Istri. V: Darovec, D. & Strčić, P. (ur.): Slovensko-hrvaško sosedstvo / Hrvatsko-slovensko susjedstvo. Koper, Univerzitetna založba Annales, 129-142.
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Čeč, D. (2007): Nasilne detomorilke ali neprištevne žrtve? Spreminjanje podobe detomora v 18. in začetku 19. stoletja. Acta Histriae, 15, 2, 415-440.
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9. When **citing archival records** *within the parenthesis* in the text, the archive acronym should be listed first, followed by the record group acronym (or signature), number of the folder, and number of the document. E.g.:
(ASMI-SLV, 273, 7r).
If the number of the document could not be specified, the record should be cited *in the footnote*, listing the archive acronym and the record group acronym (or signature), number of the folder, and document title. E.g.:
TNA-HS 4, 31, Note on Interview between Colonel Fišera and Captain Wilkinson on December 16th 1939.
The abbreviations should be explained in the section on sources in the end of the article, with the archival records arranged in an alphabetical order. E.g.:
TNA-HS 4 – The National Archives, London-Kew (TNA), fond Special Operations Executive, series Eastern Europe (HS 4).

10. If referring to **newspaper sources** in the text, you should cite the name of the newspaper, date of publication and page:
(The New York Times, 16. 5. 2009, 3)
If the title of the article is also known, the whole reference should be stated *in the footnote*:
The New York Times, 16. 5. 2009: Two Studies tie Disaster Risk to Urban Growth, 3.
In the list of sources and bibliography the name of the newspaper. Place, publisher, years of publication.
The New York Times. New York, H.J. Raymond & Co., 1857–.

11. The list of **sources and bibliography** is a mandatory part of the article**.** Bibliographical data should be cited as follows:

- Description of a non-serial publication – a book:

Author (year of publication): Title. Place, Publisher. E.g.:

Barth, F., Gingrich, A., Parkins, R. & S. Silverman (2005): One Discipline, Four Ways. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

If there are *more than two authors*, you can also use et al.:

(Barth et al., 2005).

If citing an excerpt from a non-serial publication, you should also add the number of page from which the citation is taken after the year.

- Description of an article published in a **non-serial publication** – e.g. an article from a collection of papers:

Author (year of publication): Title of article. In: Author of publication: Title of publication. Place, Publisher, pages from-to. E.g.:

Rocke, M. (1998): Gender and Sexual Culture in Renaissance Italy. In: Brown, I. C., Davis, R. C. (eds.): Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy. New York, Longman, 150–170.

- Description of an article from a **serial publication:**

Author (year of publication): Title of article. Title of serial publication, yearbook, number, pages from-to. E.g.:

Faroqhi, S. (1986): The Venetian Presence in the Ottoman Empire (1600–1630). The Journal of European Economic History, 15, 2, 345–384.

- Description of an oral source:

Informant (year of transmission): Name and surname of informant, year of birth, role, function or position. Manner of transmission. Form and place of data storage. E.g.:

Baf, A. (1998): Alojzij Baf, born 1930, priest in Vižinada. Oral testimony. Audio recording held by the author.

- Description of an internet source:

If possible, the internet source should be cited in the same manner as an article. What you should add is the website address and date of last access (with the latter placed within the parenthesis):

Young, M. A. (2008): The victims movement: a confluence of forces. In: NOVA (National Organization for Victim Assistance). Http://www.trynova.org/ victiminfo/readings/VictimsMovement.pdf (15. 9. 2008).

If the author is unknown, you should cite the organization that set up the website, year of publication, title and subtitle of text, website address and date of last access (with the latter placed within the parenthesis).

If there are more citations by the same author(s), you should list them in the alphabetical order of the authors' surnames and year of publication.

12. The **abbreviations** should *be explained* when they first appear in the *text. You can also add a list of their explanations at the end of the article.*

13. The title of a **review article** should contain the following data: author of the publication reviewed, title of publication, address, place, publisher, year of publication and number of pages (or the appropriate description given in Item 10).

14. The authors are sent the **first page proofs**. They should be returned to the editorial board within a week. It is not allowed to lengthen the text during proof-reading. Second proof-reading is done by the editorial board.

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